

that the Attorney General is unable to define clearly a precise problem. As I have said earlier, I have faith in our court system, and in Canadian men and women. I am sure that we will eventually agree upon a definition of erotica and pornography.

● (1640)

[English]

Mr. Nicholson (Niagara Falls): Madam Speaker, I would like to congratulate my colleague on the very fine way in which she articulated the problem and the challenges which the Conservative Government faces. She gives the Government full marks for being bold in this area as should the entire Parliament and as do, I believe, the people of Canada.

I have to take exception with comments which I have heard made by members of the New Democratic and Liberal Parties that this measure is not finding wide support among the people of Canada. That is absolutely wrong. Much of the support for this Bill, I admit, is not coming from lobby groups but from individual Canadians who recognize pornography when they see it in the corner store and who want something done about it.

When I heard the allegation that this concern about pornography and the Government's response to it was only something which the Tories had dreamed up and that it did not have widespread support, I checked my mail of the past week on the subject of Bill C-54.

A Mr. Ed Woodman from Niagara Falls concludes his letter to me of November 10 as follows:

I hope and pray, sir, that you will throw your whole weight behind this 100 per cent.

I also received a letter this past week from Mary Beasley of Shakespeare Avenue in Niagara-on-the-Lake. She said:

I would like to state my support for the passage of Bill C-54, as I am strongly opposed to pornography. This legislation is long overdue.

Among other things she says:

I wish my voice to be heard and to count in this battle.

I can tell Mrs. Beasley and other constituents such as Phil LoForti and Erwin Huisbrink that they are being listened to in this debate. The Government is again bringing forward the kind of legislation for which the people have been asking. We are not passing the buck as has so often been the case in justice-related issues.

My colleague referred to the prostitution Bill which was before the House. That is another example of where the buck was passed. The previous Government talked and talked about how concerned it was with the subject. However, it was the Conservative Government that finally did something about it. It gave tools to the law enforcement agencies to do something about the problem of street soliciting. The same is true in this case. Anyone can criticize, saying that they do not like the definition or that it is too narrow, too broad, too vague, too

this, or too that. However, as my colleague has said, we have had the courage to go ahead and try to do something about this problem.

The people who are not part of lobbying groups, who are not being financed by the Government, are being listened to. This legislation is a response to the very genuine concern of people about pornography. I would again like to congratulate my colleague and invite any further comment she might have.

Mrs. Bourgault: Madam Speaker, my colleague is right. The great majority of Canadians have been waiting too long for this Bill. I have received many phone calls from constituents who were sick and tired of being obliged to take pornographic videos away from their young children. The 15 or 16-year-old children do not understand why these videos are available at the store if they are harmful.

During the leaders' debate in 1984 the three leaders agreed that the Government of Canada had a responsibility to stop the illegal entrance of pornography and the degradation of women and children. The Government has decided to act and I am proud to be a member of the Government which has addressed this problem. The women and children of Canada will finally regain dignity in our great country.

Mr. Roland de Corneille (Eglinton—Lawrence): Madam Speaker, I rise to speak on this most important Bill dealing with a most important subject. When Calvin Coolidge was President of the United States he was asked by his wife who was unable to attend church that morning, "What did the Minister say, Cal? What did he talk about?" Coolidge, who was known as a man of very few words, said, "Sin". She asked, "What did he say about it, Cal?" Coolidge's reply was, "He's agin it".

I think we are all against sin. We are certainly concerned about the recent avalanche of pornographic material, especially as it becomes harder and harder in its depiction of violence, whether on television, in magazines, or what have you. We are alarmed and horrified by the pornographic and sexual abuse of children.

Various things have been said about one party and another. However, in order to counter the deluge of material which has been increasing over the years we must ensure that we pass legislation which will stamp out the proliferation of violent and degrading sexual material, especially that which applies to women and children.

Brutality, bestiality, degradation and violence are regarded by us all as abhorrent. We must try to prevent that which will educate or in any way influence people to perform violent acts or to accept them in a human and decent society. We are, therefore, in agreement with those steps which will move in that direction.

We must ensure that in doing this we do not create legislation which achieves the goal we want while bringing those goals into disrepute and making the Bill itself an objection.