

*The Address—Mr. Allmand*

this particular Speech from the Throne throughout the summer. I would like to ask my friend and colleague whether in his view the Conservative Government of Canada has produced for Canadians, and for Hon. Members of this House, the vision of Canada for which Canadians are looking? The critics of this particular Speech from the Throne are numerous. One of the main criticisms is that the Speech from the Throne is lacking in a definitive vision for Canadians. I would like my colleague to comment on that major criticism.

**Mr. Allmand:** Mr. Speaker, the Speech from the Throne with its 57 promises is very much like the Conservative election campaign material in 1984 with its 331 promises. The Conservative Party promises almost anything to any group—not all of them but darn near all of them. As a result it does not have any comprehensive goal or direction. As I said, there are many high sounding promises in the Speech from the Throne with which no one could disagree. They are like motherhood and apple pie. But the Government has certainly not convinced Canadians that it is serious. The Canadian population heard those same high sounding phrases and promises in the Speech from the Throne in 1984. They heard them in the election campaign of 1984. Yet very little was done about them. Although the Speech from the Throne is in some respects a high-sounding sweet-worded document, it contains very little credibility. Some Canadians are very cynical about the promises of the Government. They want to be shown. They are from Missouri in spirit, even if they are not from Missouri in physical fact.

**Mr. Robinson:** Mr. Speaker, the Speech from the Throne does make reference to proposed amendments to the Criminal Code. The Hon. Member in his speech talked about the whole question of social justice. One of the amendments which I believe to be a very important amendment to the Criminal Code, indeed, so important that I introduced a Private Member's Bill on the subject today, is with respect to the Criminal Code provisions relating to abortion. As the Hon. Member knows, today in the Provinces of Newfoundland and Prince Edward Island there is no access whatsoever to women for safe therapeutic abortions. I would like to ask the Hon. Member what his Party's position is with respect to the current provisions of the Criminal Code dealing with abortion? Does his Party support repeal of those provisions, allowing this very important decision to be made by a woman in consultation with her doctor as recommended by the Canadian Medical Association and many others?

**Mr. Allmand:** Mr. Speaker, in the Speech from the Throne there are some provisions relating to amendments to the Criminal Code. They refer to child sexual abuse, pornography, child prostitution and so on, but they do not mention abortion.

**Mr. Robinson:** What is your position?

**Mr. Allmand:** What we have here is more or less a re-enactment of the Bill introduced in the last session which was not passed or completed. I expect we will see that Bill again.

With respect to abortion, the position of my Party has been that the law as it stands, a situation which came about after a lot of debate and many views expressed on the subject, should not be touched at the present time. That is the position of my Party. I consider this to be a sort of free vote situation. I personally believe that the present law is not adequate, but I see many failures in it. In my own province, despite the law, juries acquitted Dr. Morgentaler on two occasions. In addition, there is no consensus on the present law in the country, it is very difficult to enforce and is causing a lot of difficulties.

I know the Hon. Member brought in a Bill this morning, but I have not had a chance to look at it. This is a complex and very emotional issue and, while I do not support the present law personally, I would like to see it re-examined, perhaps by a committee of this House. I was on the committee that did a very intensive study of this issue in 1966 or 1967 which finally resulted in a Bill that did come to the House. It was a compromise Bill, we admit. I do not think, without reading the Hon. Member's Bill, I can stand up now and say that I agree with it, but I do agree that changes should be made to the present abortion legislation which should be the subject of an intensive study by this House.

**Mr. Robinson:** Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask a supplementary question of the Hon. Member. He has referred to the promises made with respect to previous legislation affecting the Criminal Code. One of the most controversial Bills introduced was the Bill introduced by the previous Minister of Justice dealing with the question of pornography. The Hon. Member's colleague recently issued a position paper suggesting that he did not agree with the Fraser Commission's recommendation that the so-called third tier of pornography, that is, explicit erotica, should not be the subject of criminal sanctions. What is the Hon. Member's position with respect to this question of Criminal Code sanctions against explicit portrayal of sexual activity which does not involve either violence, degradation or children?

**Mr. Allmand:** Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member has an advantage over me. He is the official critic for his Party in justice matters. I am the critic for employment matters. I am afraid that I am not as much up-to-date on the very specific parts of the proposed amendment to which he refers. I am extremely interested because I was involved with the committee on Justice but I cannot remember the details of the Bill and I do not want to answer the Hon. Member's question at the present time without making a proper study of that amendment.

● (1150)

[Translation]

**Mr. Gauthier:** Mr. Speaker, I would like to put a question to my hon. friend. There is a paragraph in the Speech from the Throne that deals with official languages and bilinguism, and it reads as follows: