

*Criminal Code*

should be promoted without having to commit ourselves to a moral act of profound significance. I am in agreement with hon. members who are disturbed with the minister's attempt to deal with the moral aspect. The minister quoted the Wolfenden report. It is not the law of the Medes and Persians in regard to the social impact that a measure of this kind might have. As a matter of fact we now hear of very serious repercussions in the United Kingdom as to the effects that similar amendments made there a few years ago are having on the basic social institution of the family.

The minister referred to previous experience with regard to the moral impact as being history from a bygone era having no significance today as we consider this matter. I concluded from this that the minister has his head in the sand. I believe it was Charles Beard who reached three main conclusions as a result of a lifetime spent on historic research. They were, first, that "the mills of the Gods grind slowly, but they grind exceedingly fine"; second, "when it is dark you can see the stars". Morally, it is very dark right now in many parts of the world. Possibly there will be a light at the end of the tunnel before very long. The third and most significant is, "He whom the Gods would destroy, they first make mad."

I cannot understand why a government charged with the responsibility of leading this house and the nation is bringing in this change at this time when there has been no great public pressure or public clamor. The issue is seriously fraught with moral implications. We are bringing the morals and values of skid row into the salons and drawing rooms of the nation. I used to be a social worker. Certainly these things go on in skid row areas, but now we are bringing them right into the open and discussing them in the high court of public opinion, parliament. This will not resolve anything in terms of the problem itself.

The minister admits there is no positive approach in the legislation to this problem. If it is to be dealt with in a positive way, we must change the emphasis from punitive treatment to therapeutic treatment. There is nothing in any government program that comes to grips with the problem. We are reversing completely values and traditions which have been the foundation stone upon which our western Christian civilization has been established. This is being done without any public pressure. The initiative has come from the government.

[Mr. Dinsdale.]

There was a time when it was possible to say that all politicians were against sin and for motherhood. Here we have a reversal of this fundamental principle. Obviously this legislation means that we are formally recognizing this problem and are downgrading the role of motherhood in this nation. Our values are completely reversed, which indicates the degree to which moral decay has saturated our society. Today we hear many people in responsible positions referring to the civilization and culture of North America, the United Kingdom and in fact the whole western world as a sick society.

I am amazed that members on the government back benches have not participated in this debate because we are now reaching the crux. We have to make a decision within the next day or so. I hope some government supporters will weigh this change from the standpoint of not only its legal implications but also its moral implications.

The Prime Minister himself has given support to this legislation. As a matter of fact, he initiated the legislation when he was Minister of Justice. There is a prestige surrounding this high office which is far above the qualities of any particular incumbent. As several spokesmen have already indicated, it is the Prime Minister who in response to the serious criticisms with respect to the moral implications replied with that frivolous phrase, the state has no place in the bedrooms of the nation. Of course that is hardly worthy of the dignity and responsibilities of a man who is charged with the responsibility of leading this nation. Murder your wife in the bedroom and see how quickly the state would move in. Pile garbage in your bedroom and see how quickly the state would move in.

• (3:50 p.m.)

**Some hon. Members:** Oh, oh.

**Mr. Dinsdale:** Some of the backbenchers on the government side of the house are shouting. I wish they would get up and make speeches instead of shouting. I am speaking to the amendment.

**Mr. Crouse:** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, there is a debate going on and there are interruptions from the other side of the house.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Béchard):** Order, please. The hon. member for Brandon-Souris has the floor.