

Criminal Code

but let no one try to distort the question for this reason. Roman Catholic authorities are opposed to the bill as drafted.

[Text]

Mrs. Konantz: May I ask a question? Does the hon. member realize that the Canadian medical association have given their endorsement to this bill? If so, does he realize that the drugs to which he is referring would be given under prescription only and that this bill would not change that?

[Translation]

Mr. Gauthier: I am very pleased, Mr. Speaker, to hear that, but, if you read this bill, unless I do not know French anymore, or do not know how to read, it is not that at all. Advertising and publicity are to be allowed. Read the bill carefully and you will admit that it becomes a popular product. Now, it is for this very reason that we will always oppose such a bill as long as the sale of this product will not be subjected to medical prescription.

It is for this reason that we are against this bill. I believe there are others who wish to express their opposition as well, and I shall give them the opportunity to express their opinion to prove that I am not the only one opposing this bill.

[Text]

Mr. Lloyd Francis (Carleton): Mr. Speaker, I will not take up too much of the time of this house. I know that the hon. member for St. John's East (Mr. O'Keefe) has spoken, and much as I respect his views I do not agree with them. I have had a great many communications on this bill, even more than I have had on the flag. I have received something like 800 individual communications with regard to this bill. I have had resolutions from four churches in my riding and communications from a substantial number in addition to those.

I should like to put on the record the official views expressed through the authorities representing the different religious bodies in Canada. The Anglican Church of Canada, on September 2 and 3 of this year, at a general meeting of the executive council of the general synod and its council for social services, passed the following resolution:

Whereas the Lambeth conference of 1958 has, within the concept of the exercise of responsible freedom, given general approval to the practice of family planning and has set forth some of the principles to be considered by Christians in such practice;

And whereas for all people in Canada the exercise of responsible freedom in the area of family

[Mr. Gauthier.]

planning with due respect for civil law, is made impossible by existing legislation which prohibits the sale or dispensing of instruction, medicine or drug, or articles for use in family planning;

And whereas for certain groups in Canada the exercise of responsible freedom in the area of family planning is not possible either for economic reasons, or because of lack of factual knowledge or understanding, thus making the achievement of a full and rich marriage and family life more difficult than it might otherwise be,

This council for social service meeting in joint session with the executive council of general synod,

Urges that every effort be made to amend present legislation in Canada in such a way as to make legal the dispensing of information and means under competent medical or other professional guidance, so as to enable spouses, irrespective of their economic circumstances, who wish to exercise their freedom in planning and spacing their families in accordance with their physical and economic means, to do so with adequate knowledge and instruction.

And affirms that the dissemination of information about family planning within the context of the principles enunciated by the Lambeth conference of 1958 is a responsible practice within the education and pastoral ministry of the Anglican church.

In June 1964 the Baptist convention of Ontario and Quebec passed a resolution, the text of which I do not have in front of me, but it acknowledged the fact that very many people are violating the law as it now stands, and recommended the deletion of the words from the Criminal Code "preventing contraception or".

The Presbyterian Church of Canada adopted the following resolution at the last meeting of the general assembly:

That the general assembly call upon the federal government to revise section 150, subsection 2c of the Criminal Code of Canada re conception control—

And it gives the wording.

—so that in matters relating to the prevention of conception, the clergy, medical profession, family counsellors of governmental and municipal agencies and druggists be exempted from the section of the law having reference to advertising, instructing or selling to married couples.

Then there is the United Church of Canada:

Report of the board of evangelism and social service, 1964 approved by general council of the United Church of Canada.

And this is a substantial re-endorsement of the 1962 general resolution of the general council:

Whereas section 150 of the Criminal Code of Canada deals with, "offences tending to corrupt morals", and subsection 2c of this section states that "everyone commits an offence who... offers to sell, advertises, publishes an advertisement of, or has for sale or disposal any means, instruction, medicines, drugs or article intended or represented as a method of preventing conception or causing abortion or miscarriage",