

*Criminal Code*

mended his ways. The father of this prodigal son is naturally the sublime image of the Father of all prodigal humans. And if we choose to go our own way, He abandons us to our own desires. God's kindness should lead us to repentance, but when we scorn His mercy, His love, His kindness and we decide to go our own way, then, we are also going to the piggery to learn—perhaps from the pigs—what we do not want to learn from God.

Moreover, we, the catholic people of Quebec—and I include here the Liberal and the Conservative members who would have the various parts of the omnibus bill introduced separately—wish that a free vote be taken in order not to feel tied down. On the other hand, I know that they are now begging the prime minister not to be the shepherd who, with a wave of his hand, would compel his whole flock of sheep to jump into the sea. Those catholic members of the "belle province" would like to be treated as free men, able to speak their mind in a country, where some hope of freedom still remains. Besides, I myself recognize, as those hon. members do, that the Pope is our common leader and that he should be obeyed. Now, this is what the Pope thinks of legalized abortion, and I quote:

Let it be considered also that a dangerous weapon would thus be placed in the hands of those public authorities who take no heed of moral exigencies.

Who could blame a government for applying to the solution of the problems of the community those means acknowledged to be licit for married couples in the solution of a family problem? Who will stop rulers from favoring, from even imposing upon their peoples, if they were to consider it necessary, the methods of contraception which they judge to be most efficacious?

And this applies to the subject of abortion mentioned in the bill. And the quotation goes on:

In such a way men, wishing to avoid individual, family or social difficulties encountered in the observance of the divine law, would reach the point of placing at the mercy of the intervention of public authorities the most personal and most reserved sector of conjugal intimacy.

Consequently, if the mission of generating life is not to be exposed to the arbitrary will of men, one must necessarily recognize insurmountable limits to the possibility of man's domination over his own body and its functions; . . . limits which no man, whether a private individual or one invested with authority, may licitly surpass. And such limits cannot be determined otherwise than by the respect due to the integrity of the human organism and its functions, according to the principles recalled earlier, and also according to the correct understanding of the "principle of totality" illustrated by our predecessor Pope Pius XII.

It can be foreseen that this teaching will perhaps not be easily received by all; too numerous are those voices—amplified by the modern means of propaganda—which are contrary to the voice of the church. To tell the truth, the church is not surprised to be made, like her divine Founder, a "sign of contradiction"; yet she does not because of this cease to proclaim with humble firmness the entire moral law, both natural and evangelical. The church did not create that legislation, and thus could not be the arbiter thereof; the church is only a depository and an interpreter, without ever being allowed to proclaim lawful something which is not, because it is deeply and unalterably opposed to the true welfare of mankind.

• (12:20 p.m.)

By upholding marital ethics as a whole, the church knows that it helps the establishment of a truly humanistic civilization. It urges human beings not to avoid their responsibility by relying on technical devices, it thereby upholds the dignity of the couple. Faithful to the teaching as well as to the example of the Saviour, it shows itself as the sincere and disinterested friend of men whom it wishes to help, even as they start on their pilgrimage, here below, to share, as would beloved sons, the life of the living God.

This statement is supported by Dr. L. Kessel, Director of the Department of Biology at the University of San Francisco, who by the way, is a Presbyterian. I quote:

Scientific evidence clearly shows that life starts at conception.

He adds:

The rapid pace of the embryonic development shows us the human life in its most intensive stage of activity.

Confronted with such statements and such awareness, we as members of Parliament must do our daily duty, we, who are free men who must indicate it by voting freely, are demanding, loud and clear, with the public at large and with those intermediate bodies which will be notified tomorrow and will have to submit some briefs, that this shameful bill brought in the Parliament of Canada be withdrawn.

To confirm what I say I have in hand a statement from our bishops. I think that we, in Quebec, must be given the right to be Catholics and Christians just as we allow others to practise the religion of their choice.

As for us, we accept the Vatican's rulings. We recognize the Pope's authority and that of the bishops. I should like to quote a letter from the Catholic Episcopate of Canada:

The Catholic Episcopate of Canada, which comprises the Canadian cardinals, archbishops and bishops, has just published a statement denouncing unequivocally the federal bill tending to widen the scope of the legislation on abortion. The document first recalls the traditional way of thinking of