

*Criminal Code*

churches, both the national bodies and local churches. There is a tendency for some people to assume that the churches will be narrow-minded and traditional, but in the last little while I have had communications from churches as widely varied as the United Church of Canada, the Baptists, the Mennonites, the Lutherans, and the Unitarians. That is quite a broad spectrum of churches. If we got them all together the ecumenical movement would be well on its way.

In the letters I have received I find there has been basically the kind of approach to the problem of abortion and the problem of homosexuality that I have been trying to set out this afternoon. They do not all agree in every little detail. Some of them, and I respect their views, would like to keep abortion in the Criminal Code and to make more precise the authority of the therapeutic abortion committees and so on. These are points that should be considered by the standing committee to which this bill is referred.

But I think it is significant that in the main the churches and the church people who have been thinking about this are saying to us, "Apply reason, apply psychology, apply compassion, apply human understanding to these problems." And if I may, since I have referred to the churches, I would like to congratulate most warmly those who have written to me telling me about the meetings they have held, the study groups they have set up, and the specialists who have discussed these matters with them. This is what we are trying to get these days, participatory democracy, but at any rate, Mr. Speaker, I am sure we will be going along with the serious-minded and thoughtful people in this country if we move in the direction I have suggested, if we treat these two matters not as criminal offences but as human problems deserving the best attention and consideration we can give to them.

Now, sir, I would like to take a minute or two to refer to a number of subjects—and because I see my time is running along I shall do no more than refer to them in the form of headings—that have been mentioned by others in this group, notably by my parliamentary leader, the hon. member for York South (Mr. Lewis), and my colleague from Winnipeg North (Mr. Orlikow). I speak in this context of things that have been left out but which we think ought to be in the Criminal Code amendments.

I refer first to the proposal that corporal punishment should be abolished. We are not

living in the dark ages, in the 17th, 18th or 19th century. We are living in the 20th century. Surely corporal punishment should go.

I also think that the code should include a clear statement on the right of persons to counsel. We assume that right exists but it is not protected by law.

Lately a great deal has been said about the desirability of expunging a criminal record where the person who has been found guilty lives for a period of time without any further violation of the law. A few glaring examples have been brought to our attention of persons who have had to suffer double punishment throughout their lives because of some minor infraction that became part of their records.

Also, Mr. Speaker, I think that legislation regarding wire-tapping should have been included in this bill to amend the Criminal Code. Like others in my party I am little surprised, the hon. member for York-Scarborough (Mr. Stanbury) having produced such an excellent bill dealing with this matter, that his proposals were not incorporated in Bill C-150.

As I understand the new rules, Mr. Speaker, especially the report stage to which I have been referring, we may be able to deal with some of these matters at that time as well. The rules say that at the report stage there can be amendments to delete, to alter, to restore, or to add. Most of the rule changes we made were for the purpose of avoiding duplication and of saving time, but we knew what we were doing when we brought in the report stage. We were not saving time but we were providing a clearcut opportunity for decisions to be taken by parliament on these individual issues. I hope we will avail ourselves of that opportunity at the report stage to deal in the way I have suggested with the items I have listed.

That leaves just one other subject to which I would like to refer for a minute or two. It is the question of state lotteries. Others who have taken part in the debate have said this, so I underline what they have said, that to me it is moving back two or three centuries to think that we can solve any of our problems, whether in terms of getting money into public treasuries or in terms of undergirding welfare programs, health programs, education programs or what have you by resorting to state lotteries.

A great deal has been said about the Irish sweepstakes, but we have never had any suggestions that that country does very well