

*Criminal Code*

and the Standing Committee on Justice and Legal Affairs later will deal with this bill as one bill, indivisible, and not as several individual items of legislation. When I first accepted this portfolio I wanted to assure myself that the will of the house could be properly tested on every clause. I am satisfied, particularly under the new rules, that this can be done. I am now satisfied that the Standing Committee on Justice and Legal Affairs will review the bill clause by clause. When the bill is reported back to the house from committee, amendments to any clause are permissible under the new rules. So, sir, no hon. member will be deprived of the opportunity of making his view or vote known or felt, if that is his intention.

Why should the bill be split? Hon. members are not being deprived any rights in respect of any clause. And if the bill were split, how would we go about splitting it? Would there be a separate bill for the clauses affecting therapeutic abortion, lotteries, the breathalyzer test or the gun law? How far would we go and where would we stop? The government is of the opinion that this bill stands for the general principle of criminal and penal law reform and should be dealt with by the house on that basis.

I want to say, too, that the government fully endorses this bill. It is a government bill, bears the government stamp and will be supported by the government. We feel bound to the bill as the principal item of social reform in this session of parliament. It is identified with our Prime Minister and party. We believe it has been tested favourably with the people of Canada and has met the approval of the people in a general election. We believe therefore that, on the one hand, we have the right and, on the other hand, the duty to stand behind the bill in all stages of debate that will follow.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear.

**Mr. Turner (Ottawa-Carleton):** Again I want to say that I recognize the personal and individual trials of conscience that some hon. members have faced, and I hope that in my dealings with any hon. member I do not trespass on the inner preserves of his private convictions.

With the indulgence of the house I should like to deal with some individual provisions of the bill, with some of those that have provoked the most comment. One of the most significant amendments proposed in the bill is aimed at the drinking driver. I think all hon.

members are concerned about the rash of highway accidents and death on our roads, and it might be useful to recite a few figures. In Canada, 5,379 people died in highway accidents in 1967. This was over 200 more people than died in the same way in 1966. Publications of the Dominion Bureau of Statistics show that in the years from 1958 to 1967 the number of persons killed on our highways rose by over 66 per cent and the number of persons injured in the same period in highway accidents rose by more than 100 per cent. During the first six months of 1958, compared with the similar period in 1967, increases were registered in all categories of motor vehicle accidents. Traffic injuries were up 8.4 per cent over the same period in 1967 and traffic deaths were up 4.1 per cent over that same period in 1967.

The point of this part of the legislation is that the drinking driver is responsible for a disproportionate share of these accidents. The truth of what I am submitting to the house has been forcefully demonstrated by the study carried on in Grand Rapids, Michigan. This study is regarded as the best and most exhaustive practical study in this field in North America. By careful comparisons of groups of persons who were involved in traffic accidents—the study extended over a year and each group covered some 8,000 people—the experts who conducted the study were able to demonstrate a number of things. They demonstrated that blood alcohol levels over 0.04 per cent are definitely associated with an increased accident involvement. The probability of accident involvement increases rapidly at alcohol levels over 0.08 per cent and becomes extremely high at levels above 0.15 per cent. When drivers with blood alcohol levels over 0.08 per cent have accidents they tend to have more single vehicle accidents, more severe accidents in terms of injury and damage and more expensive accidents than similar sober drivers.

Another point brought out by the study is that drivers in the higher alcohol level classes tend to become involved more frequently in the more severe accidents. Less than 5 per cent of the drivers in the 0.00 per cent alcohol level class are involved in fatal and serious personal injury accidents but almost 10 per cent of the drivers in the 0.08 per cent and higher alcohol level class are involved in the severest class of accidents. Thus an accident involved driver in the 0.08 per cent and higher alcohol level class is almost twice as frequently involved in a fatal or serious accident as the driver in the 0.00 per cent alcohol level