

Criminal Code

have I been critical of the longevity of the discussion of this bill. I have not participated in this debate until now. I have listened with interest to members of all parties. I think some very fine speeches have been made by government members, by members of the official opposition, by members of the New Democratic Party and by some of the members of the Creditiste party. I think that members of this house respect the persuasions represented here and we have listened with interest and respect to those opinions. We are legislating in an area of great sensitivity,—this has been said many times in the past—an area involving deeply held philosophical and religious beliefs.

May I call it six o'clock, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: It being six o'clock, this sitting is suspended until 8 p.m.

At six o'clock the house took recess.

AFTER RECESS

The house resumed at 8 p.m.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Before recognizing the hon. member for Burnaby-Seymour (Mr. Perrault), I might perhaps be allowed to make a statement in respect of the amendment proposed by the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) this afternoon.

I have now had an opportunity to reflect on the amendment proposed by the hon. member and, in particular, to study it in the context of the bill itself. Having done so, I must confess that it gives rise to certain difficulties. Let me read the bill as it would stand if amended by the proposal of the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre. Section 179(A)(1) would read as follows—

—for the government of Canada to conduct and manage a lottery scheme in accordance with any law enacted by parliament and for that purpose for any person in accordance with such regulations or anything described in paragraphs—

And so on.

There are certain difficulties as to meaning and consistency; I shall not go into them now, but would refer hon. members to May, 17th edition, page 550, paragraph six.

My most serious objections are on the grounds raised by the Minister of Justice (Mr. Turner). The purpose of this bill is to authorize the government of Canada to conduct and manage a lottery scheme in accord-

ance with regulations made by the Governor in Council. The effect of the amendment, I submit, would be to strike at the essence of that proposal and would restore the law to the state it was prior to the legislation now before us. In other words it amounts, in my opinion, to an expanded negative. For this reason, and with regret, the Chair cannot put the amendment.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): If you had called on me, Mr. Speaker, I would have said that I regret it, too.

Mr. Perrault: As I stated before the house rose at six o'clock, this has been a prolonged debate but no one will deny that it has been a worthwhile and important debate. I am not among those who have been critical of the protracted nature of the discussion of this measure. Members of all parties, many of whom have spoken extremely well, have expressed strong personal opinions. The depth of their feeling is reflected in the number of days and hours the debate has taken. There have been few occasions in the history of the Canadian parliament on which such a great range of emotions has been so deeply involved.

The subject of abortion, perhaps deservedly so, has been accorded most of the attention of hon. members. I am convinced—and I believe this conviction is shared by the large majority of members of this house—that the overwhelming number of Canadian mothers will continue to accept the responsibility of parenthood in good conscience as they have in the past, regardless of some of the statement we have heard during this debate. I am equally convinced that the amendments contained in this bill, within the framework of the various safeguards, qualifications and conditions, will not lead to the wide range of serious abuses predicted by some members, particularly by those to my far left.

Most of us here have great confidence in Canadian mothers and in Canadian parents, as well as in the Canadian medical profession. Indeed, our confidence may be greater than that demonstrated by our friends to the far left in the course of this debate.

Mr. Peters: Geographically, you mean.

Mr. Perrault: Geographically, I mean. Having said all this, however, I feel in conscience impelled to ask the government, indeed, to urge the government, as we give third reading to this bill, to see that careful and complete records are compiled over the next five