

*Criminal Code*

• (3:50 p.m.)

[*Translation*.]

**Mr. Adrien Lambert (Bellechasse):** Mr. Speaker, in taking part in this discussion on bill C-150, commonly called the omnibus bill, I would like to make a few very objective remarks, in order to put before the government and the house my opinion on the various amendments to the criminal code contained in the bill.

Several members set forth their views on the bill. The minister voiced his own at length as well as that of the government. Some lawyers put forward their ideas most eloquently. Indeed, I took great interest in reading the speech of a doctor, the hon. member for Hull (Mr. Isabelle), and I congratulate him for the great deal of information he gave the house, though on some points other doctors may disagree.

My wife has been calling upon doctors' services for 30 years. During her twelve pregnancies, I always appreciated the doctor's honesty and the great care he took to protect the life inside the mother's womb, while taking all the necessary steps to keep her in good health. I am convinced that our doctors are generally well qualified and conscientious.

One lady has expressed eloquently her ideas, namely the hon. member for Vancouver-Kingsway (Mrs. MacInnis). I wish to congratulate her for her really dignified remarks, which are a credit to the fair sex.

I was greatly impressed by the seriousness shown by hon. members in the discussion of this bill. We know that there is concern on all sides, but there is also sincerity and good will.

As for myself, I am neither a doctor nor a lawyer, but my responsibility as a father makes me aware of the seriousness of this problem.

If, as the Minister of Justice (Mr. Turner) suggested, the government was given a mandate at the last election to get the amendments he introduced passed, it is also clear that the member for Bellechasse, was by the same token given a specific mandate, since at each meeting he held, he drew that question to the attention of the electorate without passion or demagoguery. Like many others, I wish the amendments in the omnibus bill had been introduced separately, which would have left each hon. member free to take a stand according to his conscience and to accept what he deemed acceptable and reject what he deemed unacceptable. The government

[Mr. McQuaid.]

will certainly answer that we can do it, either at the committee stage or when considering the report of the committee. However, at the stage of the third reading, the bill will stay undivided and, consequently, will be adopted or rejected as a whole, which means that in order to reject what does not seem acceptable we shall have at the same time to reject what would seem to us necessary and useful to society.

I have discussed that problem with the Minister of Justice; I must recognize that he has been very courteous towards me, for which I thank him.

However, in presenting to the house, in one bill, all the amendments he intends to bring to the Criminal Code, the Minister of Justice seems to have been willing to follow tradition. I am told that actually, in 1954, I think, the government followed the same course. It seems to me that when it is a matter of improving something, it would be advisable not to follow tradition. This government likes to be considered as being in the van, because it wants to amend the standing orders of the house, and I agree with that; but the people also want those amendments.

The amendment which the government wishes to effect in section 195(2) of the Criminal Code is of the utmost importance since it is likely to change the meaning of the term "homicide". I have before me a letter dated February 5, 1969, which was sent, with a document, to the hon. member for Bellechasse and, probably, to all other hon. members, by an association of parents. It shows that 13 organizations request exactly what several others requested before me and what I myself and now requesting, that the bill be divided so that we can accept what is acceptable and reject what does not seem acceptable to us. Among those associations are the Société Saint-Jean-Baptiste, a Parents Association, a chapter of the Knights of Columbus, the Catholic Nurses of the Province of Quebec, the Policemen Brotherhood of Montreal and the Federation of Policemen Brotherhoods of the province of Quebec.

One of God's commands is as good in 1969 as it was originally: "Thou shalt not kill." If I understand it correctly, Mr. Speaker, it means that we cannot take the life of our fellow-men. But what is life? It must be something extremely valuable since God, our Maker, made it one of his commands not to deprive our fellow-men of life.

It seems we are assuming that for a human being life only begins the moment a child is