

*Criminal Code*

time, the role of the State is all the more necessary since the "complexity of modern life", in a world that is dominated by organization and techniques, makes the individuals live under heavy threats and since, under the guise of progress, some are ready to relax the laws to the point where they would no longer ensure life the thoughtful respect and the effective protection it deserves.

Let us say firmly that the progress of civilization resides in the ever increasing recognition, both theoretical and practical, of the dignity of the human being, of its sacred character and its absolute inviolability.

Besides, in the field of ethics, all things hold together; evil breeds evil; it is the first step which is most painful. We were discussing contraception yesterday; today we are talking about abortion; tomorrow it will be sterilization, euthanasia, infanticide. Every battle lost is fraught with a still worst defeat. Between civilization and barbarism the road is shorter and the slope is even more slippery than one could imagine. Another step, one step too many, and it is the Fall, and as Pascal wrote, "Earth is rented to the very depth of the abyss".

According to the bishops, the government bill, in its present form, should be rejected as a whole for three main reasons.

The first one deals with the very purpose of the legislation. According to the proposed amendment, the therapeutic abortion becomes legal every time that, upon the experts' advice, the mother's life or health are endangered or liable to be endangered by pregnancy. The legislation aims therefore at permitting "direct and voluntary attempt against the life of an innocent child", and that is immoral. Inasmuch as morality must affect legality, the government project, at the very outset and in its essential content, is therefore vitiated. In denying the principle of absolute inviolability of an innocent life, it strikes a blow to the core of civilization, it shakes it right to its foundations.

The government legislation, under its present form, opens the door to serious abuses.

I think that those who have a little sense of justice and humanity, are conscious of what they can achieve, who are aware of the dignity of human life and who know to whom this life belongs, will ask themselves the right questions on this very essential legislation. I quote further:

● (5:40 p.m.)

If the bill is so imprecise, it is perhaps because the government was not quite ready to legislate. "The parliamentary committee on this question recognized in its report of December 1967 the inadequacy of the studies and inquiries on which the new legislation should have been normally based. Why is it then that its decision was so prompt on the substance of the debate and why has it submitted to the government preliminary recommendations, binding our whole future? Above all, why was the government so quick to include in the bill conclusions which, according to the committee itself, could only be hypothetical and premature? Have they both given in to the pressures of the so-called Liberal opinion? Did they

[Mr. Latulippe.]

want to stay one jump ahead of their opponents, and specially of the Roman Catholics? The bishops, it goes without saying, are not accusing anybody. They are even careful not to point out that the parliamentary committee and the government saw fit to introduce their amendment proposals before having heard those who on the religious level are supposed to speak on behalf of 50 per cent of the Canadian people. They are simply wondering if, in this hour of decision, the Canadian people have really before them all the necessary information and if parliament has the right to venture into new legislation of such significance. "For people and for civilization", without weighing by means of appropriate research the moral, psychological and sociological consequences". That is also the question we are asking ourselves and that, when the day comes, we shall ask the government.

The new legislation will not solve the problem of secret abortions and death caused by childbirth.

Mr. Speaker, according to those logical warnings approved by very competent lawyers, I believe once again that we even have no right to legislate on this matter the way we are doing it today and I ask the minister to withdraw from Bill C-150 the subsection dealing with abortion and to postpone the consideration of that matter until the time we have the necessary information and are sure of acting for the common good, according to a Christian point of view and in a logical way.

Then we may perhaps introduce a similar bill, provided full freedom is granted every member to vote according to his conscience, his common sense and his sense of justice.

The Department of Justice must live up to its name. In fact, its function is not to pass unjust legislations. Now I believe the legislation we are getting ready to pass is one of the most unjust we have ever brought out in Canada, and we have no right to pass unjust laws that go against the will of most people.

I go on quoting the statement of the bishops:

Does that mean that the Church, at this very moment and for that sole case, is going beyond the limits of the role to which, following the last council, it had consigned itself by announcing that, from now on, it would only interfere in temporal matters when public interest was at stake? Certainly not. We need only point out, in this respect, that the statement makes a very clear distinction between the moral and the legal aspects of abortion. When, dealing with the latter, it rejects the government approach, it does not do so on behalf of catholic morality as such, that is clear enough, but just in the name of morality itself, for the sake of the dignity of the human person, that is, once again, for the sake of the common