

Criminal Code—Unlawful Associations

Mr. THOMPSON (Simcoe): I was paired with the hon. member for Maisonneuve (Mr. Jean). Had I voted I would have voted against the bill.

Mr. MATTHEWS: I was paired with the hon. member for Ontario (Mr. Moore). Had I voted I would have voted against the bill.

Mr. BELL (St. John-Albert): I was paired with the hon. member for Nicolet (Mr. Dubois). Had I voted I would have voted against the bill.

Mr. PETTIT: I was paired with the hon. member for Kamouraska (Mr. Bouchard). Had I voted I would have voted against the bill.

Mr. BERTRAND (Translation): I was paired with the hon. member for Toronto Northeast (Mr. Baker). Had I voted I would have voted for the bill.

Mr. PERRAS (Translation): I was paired with the hon. member for Stanstead (Mr. Hackett). Had I voted I would have voted for the bill.

Mr. LARUE (Translation): I was paired with the hon. member for Vaudreuil-Soulanges (Mr. Thauvette). Had I voted I would have voted against the bill.

CRIMINAL CODE AMENDMENT

The house resumed, from February 22, consideration of the motion of Mr. Woodsworth for the second reading of Bill No. 24, to amend the criminal code (unlawful associations), and the proposed amendment thereto of Mr. Guthrie.

Mr. ALFRED SPEAKMAN (Red Deer): Before the vote is taken I desire to state very briefly why I propose to vote for the motion and for the repeal of section 98 of the criminal code. In spite of what has been said by some hon. members in this house, I feel it is hardly necessary for me to say that I am in no way connected with Moscow or with the third international, and that I am not an emissary of the Soviet government. I think it is unnecessary because the majority of members in this house and the majority of the people of this country are prepared to extend to others the right of an honest and impartial opinion upon the various matters that come before this parliament, and to believe that other people express their own views as impartially and as honestly as are stated the views expressed by those who might criticize them.

It is true that I have not been twelve years in this house without knowing that there are to be found everywhere, although not in

[Mr. Casselman.]

very large numbers, people who find it impossible to believe that those who differ from them on any matter can be actuated by any but foolish or sinister motives, and it is true that I have been accused of many things during those twelve years. For example, I have been accused, if you care to put it that way, of being pro-Liberal in the years I have endeavoured to cooperate with a Liberal administration and it has been asserted that I have Conservative leanings when I attempt to cooperate with the Conservative party in power; I have also been said to be radical when I have ventured to disagree with both of these parties and have suggested that there might be fundamental changes in a constitutional way to the advantage of all. It has been suggested at times that I might even be a clog on the wheel of progress. Notwithstanding all that however no one has so far accused me of being communist or anarchist, nor has it been said that I have advocated violence, bloodshed or unconstitutional methods in the obtaining of any end in this country, or that I have had any sympathy with those who do advocate such methods.

My reasons for opposing section 98 may briefly be summarized under three heads: That it is unsound in principle; that it is ineffective in its application; and that it is unnecessary for its purpose. As to its being unsound in principle, I have heard it suggested by speakers in this house, and particularly by the hon. member for Wetaskiwin (Mr. Irvine), that it has the semblance more of a czarist form of legislation than British. I agree with him. Indeed, I would go further; it savours, in my opinion, more of a soviet than of a British form of legislation. In a word, it is the type of legislation that has been passed from time immemorial by governments who were not imbued to the full with that great British ideal of constitutional freedom and of freedom of speech. As a matter of fact, traces of that are seen throughout history. You will note that history records that in every civilized country at least there have been revolutions of one sort or another during the past centuries, but it remained for Great Britain to accomplish a revolution with the minimum of bloodshed and the minimum of disorder; while those countries that had the most repressive legislation, so far as speech was concerned, were the countries where changes were carried out and put into effect with the maximum of disorder, the maximum of bloodshed and the maximum of human suffering.

There is a principle involved. It is true I cannot boast that I am Canadian born; I am British born and have spent almost the