

Criminal Code

cent of the votes. Even if 63 per cent were against it, that did not prevent the government from holding office.

In such circumstances, we do not hold a majority. And yet a majority is against the present administration. That is why to say that a minority holds back the majority is a ridiculous statement. On what grounds can one be prevented from taking the floor in the house? Will such a practice be used to undermine a sound democracy?

I shall quote but one paragraph of a letter sent by Mrs. Marie-Paule Doyle to Mr. Marcel Gingras, editorial writer of *Le Droit*, who in his lucubrations decided to write an article on the Créditistes' stand against the omnibus bill.

Mrs. Doyle concludes her letter as follows:

Our democracy is a pitiful one and I am very disappointed to find that the media, which in my opinion should ensure that democracy operates as well as possible, are so willing to flatter a government whose members are mere puppets.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Justice (Mr. Turner) admits it sometimes most candidly, he tells us that he cannot do anything, because he has some commitments.

It is too bad, because the Minister for whom we have a high regard and who moreover we find much more handsome than the Prime Minister—

Some hon. Members: Attention, attention!

Mr. Matte: —on account of all those stories has unfortunately become a mere puppet. His features, his attitude, his fine bearing, in fact everything in him are not consistent with the word puppet and I am sorry to say that he is one, because it is true.

Therefore, the argument, according to which a minority delays the proceedings of the house—an argument which they are starting to hurl at us—is untrue. When we maintain that a majority of Canadians are against abortion, we are absolutely convinced. And the intervention of the hon. member for Vancouver-Kingsway has all the less surprised us, because I remember that at the beginning of the discussion on the bill we had told the house that the bill, especially as far as homosexuality and abortion were concerned, actually originated from the New Democratic Party and we still have again another proof thereof.

People say that we are going back to the Dark Ages, that we express ideas that are as dead as the dodo. In barbarian times, such actions were common. They were perpetrated in primitive tribes, where the mother or the

[Mr. Matte.]

father had a right of life or death over their children. Abortion was performed, not only when the child was in its mother's womb, but at the time of birth, so that girls were killed with impunity, but boys were safe. Those things happened in barbarian times, during the Dark Ages.

Today, we live in a modern world where the right to freedom comes first. The most valuable right to freedom is the right to live and this is the one we defend. This is the very right we are defending today from a position of strength, since we got the support of a great number of Progressive Conservative members and here again I would like to quote what the hon. member for Calgary North said yesterday:

Tonight, a great nation is bleeding. It is bleeding because the government insisted, because of the antagonism of the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau), on bringing in this bill, no matter what other important questions were facing the nation, and ramming it through the house. I am not one of those who are critical of my hon. friends to the left.

He should have said to the extreme left.

That little group has fought and stood for the principles in which it believes. These hon. members are content to have their names publicized and to be accused of filibustering. They feel deeply about this question. The minister knew this when he introduced the bill. The Prime Minister knew it. We are now engaged in a debate on this contentious issue. The bill contains many worth while amendments. The minister knows how I and my party feel about amendments to the Criminal Code.

We are not alone, Mr. Speaker, but we have been alone unfortunately, in discharging our true responsibilities, we have been alone in stirring up public opinion and in awakening somewhat the conscience of hon. members. We are going on today with determination, all the more so as we find that others now share our views, that others have finally understood that our fight is not a useless one. Whether this bill is adopted or not, whether these clauses are adopted or not, when the people learn of the consequences which we have stressed, they will recognize those who have fought for a just cause.

• (12:50 p.m.)

Those who were not swayed by emotions or blood, realize that the only possible attitude is to preserve the privileges attached to the indefeasible right to live, and that this indefeasible right also belongs to a human being still in the mother's womb.

What is the value of human life? I could say that a building has a certain value, and the same thing goes for human life, but the building has value only in relation to human