

Supply—Justice

Is the minister going to sit idly by in the hope that the officials who administer his department will be more efficient tomorrow than they are today or is he going to be dynamic in this portfolio? Is he going to be an effective Minister of Justice who will look into this problem and get to the bottom of it? This is the kind of action we hope to get from a new Minister of Justice, because a new broom sweeps clean.

I have spoken longer than I should have, Mr. Chairman, but this is a very important subject. I should like to summarize the recommendations that I place before the minister. The jurisdiction of the Exchequer Court should be completely reviewed. A complete review should be carried out in the matter of appeals from the Exchequer Court to the Supreme Court of Canada. I recommend that the Criminal Code be reviewed now, not tomorrow. We must get away from some of these archaic laws which lay down age limits in regard to offences. We must get away from some of the archaic laws with respect to insanity, corporal punishment and attempted suicide. Many of the provisions of the Criminal Code were written under the old, ecclesiastical law. We need a code that fits present day conditions and mankind.

Let us consider the Narcotic Control Act. Let us not back away from amending the act because we may lose some votes if we take marijuana off the list of prohibited drugs. Most of us have families, no matter what position we hold in life, and our boys and girls are getting into difficulty. As a member of the Liberal party said the other day much better than I can, juvenile delinquency today seems to be moving into all strata of society. Let us enact laws that we can be proud of, which will help the youth of today and which will enable them to say later in life that our generation changed the law and gave it a greater degree of dignity. The laws we enact should be tools that serve society. Let us make sure, above all, that we appoint to the bench the very best men available.

Before this session began I noticed in the newspapers that the minister said he was going to talk to the Canadian Bar Association. This has some advantages and disadvantages. We have in the past done a pretty good job in appointing to the bench the very best men with wide experience. However, perhaps the time has now come when judges should receive special training in psychiatry and psychology so that when they hand out sentences they will know something about our youth. We have in this country judges

[Mr. Woolliams.]

who have never had a family. I am not being critical of that. Some of our judges have been involved in incorporated companies all their lives, and when they have to pass sentence on an accused they tell me it worries them. Perhaps it is time we set up special schools for judges. Let us become progressive and change some of our old laws that have outlived their usefulness.

I appreciate the committee having extended my time, particularly the Minister of Justice who has listened very carefully to my recommendations.

Mr. Winch: Mr. Chairman, I should like to speak briefly on the estimates now before us. The remarks I desire to make follow exactly the theme of the previous speaker, namely, that there is a law for the rich and a law for the poor. I admit I am not a lawyer and therefore cannot give the same kind of discourse as the hon. member who has just resumed his seat. But over the years, because I have a great interest in the matter of penology, I have had the opportunity of interviewing hundreds of the inmates of our jails and penitentiaries. I have received correspondence from hundreds of inmates incarcerated all over the country. Very rarely a week goes by without my receiving a letter from an inmate of a penitentiary setting forth his problems and grievances.

It is absolutely heartbreaking to receive one of these letters, investigate the matter and find proof of what the previous speaker called a law for the rich and a law for the poor. I fully appreciate that there is in matters of justice split jurisdiction as between the federal and provincial authorities. However, we must recognize that although the provinces have jurisdiction in the administration of justice, a great many of our laws are made federally. We must also remember that the Minister of Justice appoints our judges. Therefore a responsibility rests on the shoulders of the Minister of Justice irrespective of the question of jurisdiction.

We oftentimes read of meetings of the bar associations across Canada and see what matters they discuss and the views they hold. We know that upon occasion there are meetings of magistrates and judges. I note that these meetings are often addressed by the attorney general of a province or, as a general rule, by the Minister of Justice. Therefore I am taking these few moments to say to the minister that, even though there is split