

Criminal Code

[Translation]

Mr. Gauthier: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to congratulate you for being impartial, since my remarks were in order, whereas the silence of the hon. member for Lapointe was not.

Mr. Speaker, I was finishing reading the report on the bill. The hon. member for Lapointe is trying to make me digress from the subject matter.

The amendment under consideration is the best one moved since the beginning of the debate, and I am particularly proud of it as it was moved by a Liberal member. I like it when Liberals are sincere, since I feel there are good people among the Liberal members. However, a good animal on a leash is not worth much. Just set the Liberals free, and you will see that the business of the house will be speeded up and amendments accepted.

I was saying... I have now lost the thread of my thoughts.

An hon. Member: It was not a big one.

Mr. Turner (Ottawa-Carleton): Your thread was not a big one.

Mr. Gauthier: But the amendment is not a "big" one. Just one word. We have to speak for 20 minutes on one word, while limiting ourselves to the amendment. The hon. member for Lapointe, being a lawyer, tries to catch us digressing from the subject, but he has nothing to do. He does not digress since he does not speak.

I have another letter of protest which I should like to send to the minister—

Mr. Marceau: I rise on a question of privilege, Mr. Speaker—

Mr. Gauthier: I realize, Mr. Speaker, that I have only three minutes left. I would then beg leave from the house to read this letter.

[English]

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please. I see the hon. member for Lapointe wishes to rise on a question of privilege. I will hear him, as I am duty bound to do.

[Translation]

Mr. Marceau: Mr. Speaker, I wish to draw to the attention of my hon. friend the fact that he has just made a rash and untrue judgment. I have talked on second reading of the bill, I have already expressed my viewpoint and what he has said about me is not fair.

[Mr. Deputy Speaker.]

[English]

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please. This matter does not constitute a point of privilege.

[Translation]

Mr. Gauthier: Mr. Speaker, I respect my hon. friend for Lapointe. I simply told him that he had not spoken to the amendment and that I wanted him to do so. It is not asking too much, I think.

Now, for the information of the Minister of Justice, I would like to read a letter published in *Le Droit*, January 30, 1969 issue, and which reads as follows:

With respect to the abortion bill, Catholic hospitals say that they are in an awkward position.

In a letter sent to the Minister of Justice—

So he received a letter. I go on quoting:

—the Association of Catholic Hospitals of Canada asserts that the bill... designed to legalize, in certain conditions, therapeutic abortion, could place Catholic hospitals in awkward positions.

● (9:20 p.m.)

I am sure, once again, that it is for that reason that the hon. member for Gatineau is trying to do something about it. I continue:

Catholic hospitals refuse to provide for such purposes premises, equipment or staff under their authority.

Because of that position, the A.H.C.C. maintains that the bill would place Catholic hospitals in a very vulnerable position, since provincial authorities can oblige them, pursuant to the proposed amendments to the Criminal Code, to establish abortion committees in their own institutions.

Therefore, the A.H.C.C. asks, on behalf of all its members, that a special clause be inserted in the proposed amendment to protect Catholic hospitals and their staff against the obligation of establishing such committees.

This amendment answers the desired purpose.

[English]

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please. I am sorry to interrupt the hon. member but his time has expired.

[Translation]

Mr. Gérard Laprise (Abitibi): Mr. Speaker, I too should like to congratulate the hon. member for Gatineau (Mr. Clermont) for having brought in an amendment to Bill C-150, in order to clarify one of its clauses and to make it clearer. However, I wonder if he went far enough.

Mr. Speaker, in rising to support that amendment, I should like to make one thing clear. Even if I support this amendment to clause 18 of Bill C-150, it does not mean