

were passed. I have read the Bible most of my life and have studied it extensively. The hon. member argues that if the proposed changes in clause 1 of the bill were passed it would mean that subsection 159(8) of the Criminal Code would prevent him from reading the Bible. If this bill fails—and I hope it does not—and if the hon. member's view prevails, I hope it will give him reason to keep on reading the Bible. I hope he will read it from cover to cover and not just those explicit sections to which he referred.

The issue of censorship is brought up every time we discuss this bill. I am sure there is not a member in this House who does not believe in censorship. Everyone here, including you, Mr. Speaker, believes in censorship. The only thing we differ about is what is going to be censored. If someone proposed that we legalize anti-Semitic literature, I think all of us would be horrified that we should go through that holocaust again. Every one of us would decry that type of publication and want it stopped.

We all agree there are some things that ought not to be published and which some people should not benefit from. What we disagree on is what is destructive. I maintain that the publication of anti-Semitic literature is destructive. I maintain also that the kind of literature referred to in this bill is destructive and that those who profit by it are even more destructive. So, Mr. Speaker, I ask hon. members whether they believe in censorship and whether they should not include in their definition of what is destructive some other elements in society which try to destroy us.

We want freedom of choice in this country and I want to see that preserved. But how are we going to preserve freedom of choice for the next generation if we allow these sordid people to influence the future thinking of today's children, to program them in such a way that in future they will not have freedom of choice?

The purveyors of this filth load it on to the newsstands. Ironically the drugstore newsstands, those areas that are supposed to be preserving the health of our country, are loaded with the kind of so-called literature that is destructive and is now programming the thinking of children who, when they become adults, will not be able to make rational and informed decisions. Children of an impressionable age have a high curiosity level, but they have a low level of information on the consequences of their decisions and a low level of experience upon which to draw. Now we have them being bombarded with this kind of material and they are programmed in such a way that they can no longer make a firm, rational decision later on in life.

● (1752)

What we are looking for is a freedom of decision making process in our society. What people who want to make money from the exploitation of these children want is to program them so that in years to come they have a ready market. It is ironic that this House several years ago passed Bill C-58 which was designed to close the borders to television from the United States. Whether or not we are for that bill is either one thing

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or the other. It is ironic that we should close off television from the United States but keep it relatively open for this kind of material. We cannot have it both ways forever.

One of the popular terms today is "sexual orientation". It is said that this should be a matter of individual choice. Individual choice has become such a buzz word, such a matter of sanctimonious discussion, that we really do not adopt a consistent attitude toward it. We do not allow individuals to express their individual choice when it comes to the handling of firearms, as the hon. member for New Westminster well knows because he supported the gun legislation. In that case we do not want to have individual choice because that would become destructive. A guy could take a "Saturday night special" and go to a store or bank and shoot somebody. We do not want individual choice in that area. Why is it, then, when it comes to sexual orientation, when it comes to sexploitation, when it comes to "child porn," that we all of a sudden become sanctimonious about the matter of individual choice?

I come back to my original statement, sir, that we are not in disagreement on freedom of information or freedom of publication; what we are agreed on is that we want to preserve choice, but we cannot preserve choice in our society if children are already programmed to think in a certain way before they are ready to make an informed decision.

I compliment the hon. member for Provencher for bringing this matter forward and allowing us to speak and make a decision on it. I ask hon. members to give passage to this bill so that it can go forward to the committee stage. If hon. members wish to make some changes to it, if they think there is merit to it, as the hon. member for Toronto-Lakeshore (Mr. Robinson) says there is and as the hon. member for New Westminster agreed, let them make amendments to the bill there. But let the bill go to committee so that we can discuss it further.

[Translation]

Mr. Raynald Guay (Lévis): Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate the hon. member for Provencher (Mr. Epp) for introducing this bill, and I want to give the House my first reflections after reading it. First of all, I find it does not go far enough in its definitions. The definition it gives of an obscene thing does not seem complete or large enough to me, as several members who took part in this debate pointed out. I see the definition of an obscene thing not only in the area of sex but also in the exploitation of hatred, anger, false heroes in movies that lead young people to imagine a false society of false heroes.

A big thing has been made out of sex but when talking about sex I think we have to go further and after reading this bill and listening to the debate in the House this afternoon I wonder what kind of society we want to build for our young people if they are exploited even before they are part and parcel of society, even before they are of age and responsible within society, even before they have the right to vote, because the bill defines a child as being under 16. Those young people are being exploited not only in the area of sex but also by