

Criminal Code

the text relating to abortion the words "of the female sex".

One understands the minister when he speaks, for instance, of the rape of a female person. One can explain the reasons why in the Criminal Code the distinction is made between the male sex and the female sex as far as other matters except abortion are concerned. But in connection with abortion itself we still do not know how it is possible that a person of a sex other than the female sex may get an abortion. Medically speaking, nobody has proved to us yet that a person of another sex may secure an abortion. And that is why we find that this legislative text is ridiculous, not serious, and we feel obliged to bring in amendments that are not serious to make comprehensible a text we would have liked the minister to change between the committee report and second reading of the bill.

So we seriously and sincerely regret that the minister should go on sponsoring a bill that the public and even his fellow lawyers find ridiculous and stupid and in which mention should only be made of abortion and not of abortion of a female person.

I believe that on this point at least the Minister of Justice (Mr. Turner) could accept to amend the Criminal Code. If up to now that text has been the laughing stock of the public, he should try not to be responsible for the continuance of a wording which is preposterous. Let us have at least legislation which is logical, shows common sense and corresponds to the views of doctors, who have asked us to remove from the Criminal Code the words "female person" in 12 or 13 different places when speaking of abortion.

We recognize that we must limit our remarks to the topic, the abortion of "a female person" and that we must express ourselves concisely. But when we speak of female persons, we speak of more than half the population. That is why we were pleased to support the remarks and the amendments of the hon. member for Abitibi (Mr. Laprise) aimed at removing from the Criminal Code such ridiculous, stupid and senseless words which show a lack of maturity on the part of the Liberal party. It claims to be a serious party; yet it introduced in this house a bill which was prepared by God knows whom. It was prepared not by hospitals, or doctors, or medical associations, but by civil servants who kept on repeating, in the proposed amendments to the Criminal Code or in the bill on abortion, the same stupidities we had before

[Mr. Rondeau.]

concerning the abortion of a female person. The expression existed way before the Minister of Justice (Mr. Turner) came to this house, way before the friends of his predecessor, who introduced the bill, thought of protecting themselves by asking the government to amend the Criminal Code with regard to abortion and homosexuality.

I support in all seriousness the amendment moved by the hon. member for Abitibi. It may not seem serious in the eyes of the minister but, otherwise, the matter will continue to be a joke in our society and especially for those who will have to plead before our courts, when they must speak of "the abortion, Your Honour, of a female person".

Again, this will prove that the Liberal party goes by what experts say in introducing amendments to the Criminal Code, in this omnibus bill, in introducing changes which basically are not serious.

• (3:20 p.m.)

Mr. Réal Caouette (Témiscamingue): Mr. Speaker, just a few words about the expression of "the female sex", that my colleague from Abitibi (Mr. Laprise) would like to see eliminated because it is understood, according to the clear and precise explanations of the Minister of Justice (Mr. Turner), that this expression should be used when speaking about abortion.

This is likely a result of Bill C-150 dealing with homosexuality. By speaking of female persons, it establishes clearly that homosexuals shall not have the right to get an abortion. These are undoubtedly the explanations the minister meant us to understand a while ago by referring to the Criminal Code, to the law that has always existed, so that it would be clearly established in everybody's mind that a man has no right to get an abortion even if he is in love with another man.

That is why the expression "of the female sex" is maintained. So in my opinion, Mr. Speaker, all explanations are unnecessary. Everybody knows that abortion is for women and not men, as far as the operation itself is concerned. So, the Minister of Justice probably knows the rules, the law, the Criminal Code and so on. By using this expression, he wanted to spare men difficulties that could happen some 20 years from now in Canada.

Mr. René Matte (Champlain): Mr. Speaker, I should like at the outset to set the record straight. Although I interject remarks