

Criminal Code

works two ways. It takes two parties to disagree; one party proposes something and another party agrees or disagrees with it. In this case the Creditistes happen to disagree with a measure proposed by the government. The government has a perfect right to withdraw this section of the bill, and if this were done the debate would end very quickly.

An hon. Member: Stick to medicine.

Mr. Yewchuk: I stick to medicine on weekends, but at the present time I have to stick to philosophy. Turning from medicine to philosophy, Mr. Speaker, I point out that one of the problems facing the farmers of the west is that they cannot sell their wheat. The government is either unable or unwilling to market their wheat. Therefore, why are we in the House of Commons talking about legalizing abortions and homosexuality? How will this help sell wheat? We have a housing crisis in this country; more than half of the work force of Canada cannot afford to buy, a house in which to live. I ask again, why are we talking in the House of Commons about legalizing abortions and homosexuality? How will this solve the housing crisis? I do not think it will. I believe we are wasting time.

This government has a responsibility to govern, to deal with the serious problems facing the country. Yet here we are wasting time talking about a controversial matter which will have no bearing on the economic problems facing us and will in no way alleviate those problems.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Béchard): Order, please. I would ask the hon. member how he relates the sale of wheat to the amendment that is before us.

Mr. Yewchuk: I apologize, Mr. Speaker, and will try to keep to the amendment under discussion, but I think these are related questions. Solutions of the problems I am discussing are being delayed by talking about the abortion question, which as far as I am concerned is simply too controversial to proceed with at this time. I am sure that every member on the government side who has read his correspondence dealing with the question of abortion will admit that most of it has been against the bill.

Some hon. Members: No.

Mr. Yewchuk: Pushing forward with this legislation to legalize abortions and homosexuality has bogged down the government so much that the business of the country is being seriously neglected. I think the Minister

[Mr. Yewchuk.]

of Justice (Mr. Turner) is aware that this is an unpalatable section of the omnibus Criminal Code bill. We have reached the point where the minister should withdraw this section, but he will not do so. I wonder whether this debate will be referred to on a later occasion when rule 16A again comes before the house and whether the government will say: We told you so; we have to set time limits on debates to prevent this happening in the future. I can see this coming. I shall not accept that argument if it is raised in support of rule 16A which was discussed before Christmas.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): We aborted it!

Mr. Yewchuk: I should like to ask the Minister of Justice a question which I hope he will answer. Why was it so important to deal at this time with the sections of the bill concerning abortion and homosexuality? Canada is 102 years old. We have been getting along just fine with things the way they were. Therefore, why is this issue so important at the present time? Why are we taking up the time of the house talking about this question when we face so many serious problems in the country? Why, in view of this, are we discussing these two controversial issues?

I conclude by saying that I hope the government will reconsider its position and live up to its responsibility to deal with the important economic problems facing the country. I have mentioned a couple of those problems but there are others such as the spiralling cost of living, high interest rates and poverty. Twenty-five per cent of our people are living under conditions of poverty. How will legalizing abortion and homosexuality solve the problem of poverty? I do not think it will. I believe we are wasting time. I think it is shameful that we have spent so many days discussing this bill, thus delaying the honest to goodness business of the house about which we should be talking at the present time.

● (2:40 p.m.)

[Translation]

Mr. Gérard Laprise (Abitibi): Mr. Speaker, I rise in my turn in order to strongly support the amendment No. 19 moved by my colleague, the hon. member for Shefford (Mr. Rondeau), and tending to delete clause 18 of Bill C-150.

I do not intend, as usual, to speak too long. Many things have been said on the subject,