

Government Orders

I can say that tomorrow will be an allotted day and next Wednesday will likely be an allotted day. We are in the process of working out a House order which will lay out the details for Monday and Tuesday.

Mr. Gray (Windsor West): Mr. Speaker, there is an additional point I would like to raise with my colleague, the Government House Leader. In the past it has been customary, although not always the case, that when a Prime Minister returns to Canada from an overseas trip he would give a statement to the House about the developments that took place during that trip. In that connection would it be expected that the Prime Minister would report to the House about his trip to the Soviet Union.

Mr. Lewis: Mr. Speaker, I will certainly raise that representation with the Prime Minister as soon as possible.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*Translation*]

CRIMINAL CODE

MEASURE TO AMEND

The House resumed consideration of the motion of Mr. Lewis that Bill C-43, an Act respecting abortion, be read the second time and referred to a legislative committee.

Mr. Guy Ricard (Laval): Mr. Speaker, when the bell rang I still had a few minutes left in my remarks to the House concerning the very important issue of abortion.

I was saying that the measure under consideration is not perfect but that it is a step in the right direction. I made the statement because I feel that pursuant to the second part of the bill a woman could consult her physician and have an abortion on demand. I think that the opinion of only one physician is not enough.

I believe that a committee of three or five doctors could interview the woman, meet with her family and all people involved and explain to them exactly what it is all about and what are the psychological and physical consequences of an abortion. Mr. Speaker, I think this would have more influence on the behaviour than if there were only one physician.

I am not saying the Bill must be rejected because if we do that it would be like voting pro-choice since the Bill would stay on the shelf, never to be heard of again. We would have no opportunity to delve into the question, debate every aspect of the consequences of abortion, and talk about family planning.

Mr. Speaker, this is why I support the motion for second reading so we may study the matter in committee and bring in the necessary amendments and corrections.

Among such amendments and corrections I would favour considering the advisability of a properly structured family policy, nothing very hard to implement and which only civil servants can easily understand, but something simple which would make it possible for men and women, families and children to develop in society, to make use of our common wealth and plan in the long term. I would like to see structures designed to accommodate all needy people. We could help them earn a living and seek fulfillment in a more or less liberal career.

I think that all we have done so far is paper over the cracks in our society. We have been trying to plug holes. As I said at the beginning of my remarks, Mr. Speaker, we have put band-aids on wooden legs. All parties in the House of Commons have been asking for the establishment of government structures and policies aimed at the family. What are we waiting for?

• (1510)

Mr. Speaker, I should think that Members who will have the opportunity to sit on the legislative committee to study the measure on abortion will be in a position to shed their political party bias, make constructive amendments to the Bill—amendments geared to the 21st century—and set up the kind of structures which will enable us to prosper in this beautiful and great country of ours.

[*English*]

Hon. Warren Allmand (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce): Mr. Speaker, once again Parliament is confronted with the complex and difficult issue of abortion. I say complex and difficult because we must deal with such questions as when does human life begin in the unborn child, when is it permissible to terminate that life and for what reasons, and also, to what extent should the criminal law apply to behaviour surrounding the abortion question.