

Criminal Code

of the people in my riding to come here to express my thoughts and feelings as I see fit. I am alarmed and disgusted at the action of the Prime Minister and members of his cabinet in not allowing their colleagues on the government side, on the Liberal benches, to exercise that right.

As much as I would like to see our leader become prime minister, as much as I would like to see our party form the government and as much as they deserve to form the government, I am glad I am not part of a government in which I would be forced to vote against my conscience and vote against everything which I have been taught is wrong, unjust and unchristian. I would suggest to you, Mr. Speaker, that if hon. members opposite start wearing beards it is because they do not have the guts to shave in the morning. I thank God that my colleagues and I will be able to shave in the mornings because we have had the right to exercise our prerogatives and vote as our consciences dictate. I make no bones about the fact that I am proud that I will be voting against this bill on second and third reading. I hope members opposite will come to life, realize that they are individuals; that they are Christians; that they are people and realize that to their constituents they have grave responsibility.

● (9:20 p.m.)

I hope that members will vote, not as the so-called leaders of the just society dictate, but as their own consciences dictate. If they do, I am sure they will vote against this bill. As I said before, if they vote on this basis they will be able to sleep at night and shave in the morning with the realization that they have done what they are supposed to do; that is act as men and not as robots.

In closing, I would urge my fellow members opposite to give very serious thought to this matter and not be persuaded or enticed to vote against their consciences because the party whip is on. Rather, they should stand up like men and vote as their consciences dictate. If they do that, I have no doubt or fear that they will vote against this bill.

Mr. Arnold Peters (Timiskaming): Mr. Speaker, during the last few minutes I have been interested in listening to several members from the newest province of Canada, and I should like now to welcome them to this generation and the twentieth century. I really thought that Joey Smallwood was about as backward a man as one could meet and I

[Mr. Carter.]

confirmed this opinion when I was with the woodworkers' association. I found that he was not interested in the people of the other provinces and had not heard of them. He wanted to decide what wages were to be paid and under what working conditions. If he is to the left of some of the representatives we now have from that province, God pity them in that province because of the development which will take place in the next 20 or 30 years.

An hon. Member: Smallwood didn't think much of you either.

Mr. Peters: I am sure he didn't, and I am very fortunate that I was elected to parliament because I would probably have ended up in jail in Newfoundland as a result of being diametrically opposed to everything I heard him say about that particular part of the country. I suggest that even those who have spoken for the dinosaur class would be willing to admit that if another part of the country had a different climate and different development, that climate and development would not necessarily fit in their category. Surely, they can be broad minded enough to allow the rest of the country to develop in a reasonable manner.

The Prime Minister of Canada (Mr. Trudeau), during the drafting of the changes to the Criminal Code introduced by Bill C-185, was able to present to the country the thing he considered would lead to a just society. The expression was first used in a political sense by another millionaire, Governor Rockefeller. It was not used during an election campaign but following the 1966 election when he advised the civil servants and the members of the establishment to develop this expression "the just society". It may be that as a result of wealth, benevolence will flow in various directions. If that was the cause, then I support the reasoning and the effects.

Changes to the Criminal Code are long overdue. Before the Prime Minister, the former Minister of Justice, takes credit for this change he would be well advised to have a look at a number of private members' bills which have been on the order paper since I was elected. I remember when abortion was first mentioned in a private members' bill. The sponsor of that particular bill took it upon himself to accept the abuse that flowed following the introduction of this particularly unpopular subject. I can take some small credit for the introduction of a bill of a similar nature. This involved divorce legislation, and was far ahead of its time.