

Criminal Code

since they would then be doing something criminal. I quote:

No, life should be protected, with the utmost care from the very moment of conception. "Abortion and infanticide are loathsome crimes."

You, as members of the house, will have to vote on this overcrowded bill. In my opinion, it should be rejected. That is what the people would do if they were used to assume their responsibilities.

Mrs. Hébert puts forward the three following arguments:

1. You want to respect the life of criminals and make abortion legal.

2. The experience of other countries is quite enough for us.

3. Abortion cannot be considered just as a means. The best solution is birth control.

She ends her letter by saying this, and I quote:

I should like to have more information about the contents of the bill in order to study it. The public is hardly given any information about this bill. It should be well informed.

Mme André Hébert
108 Académie
Victoriaville.

I could quote still other letters, Mr. Speaker. I even have here some petitions, but I do not want to waste the time of the house.

I simply want to make a few comments before concluding, Mr. Speaker.

First of all, the present government, the Minister of Justice, and Liberal members—and, I make no bones about it, Progressive Conservative members as well—are all afraid of having to face people with this bill. They are afraid of asking the people what they think of it. They are afraid of giving them information on it. That is why the government house leader and government members would like the bill to be adopted as soon as possible, without discussing it in detail, without really amending it. Last week, we even saw a Liberal member complain that he could not amend a bill in committee.

Now, Mr. Speaker, what will become of this bill C-150 if it reaches the committee stage? If what the member for York East (Mr. Otto) said is true, that is that government members were ordered not to amend bills in committee in order not to hold up the business, bill C-150 will be passed without resistance because the members will have been afraid to assume their responsibilities, and what is worse still, because they will not have consulted the people.

Mr. Speaker, I would not like to be in the shoes of the Liberal members who tomorrow will have to answer to their electors; for even

now, we are starting to see that the people have had enough of anti-human legislative measures which do not really meet the needs of the people. Indeed, our real problems are family, economic and social problems, and the present government is doing absolutely nothing to alter the situation.

I must not take up any more of the time of the house, but before I bring my remarks to a close I call again for a free vote on this bill, so that every member of the house, regardless of party, religion, or politic allegiance, can vote freely, without running the risk of overthrowing the government.

To my mind, we would then be showing humanitarian feelings, proving how serious we are, instead of being irresponsible and cowardly as we are now.

I should like to hear people speak up on this bill according to the dictates of their conscience and not those of their leader.

I feel that there are times in life when human interests must take precedence over those of the party. It is most unfortunate that in this house—

Mr. Gaston Isabelle (Hull): May I put a question to the hon. member?

Mr. Fortin: Certainly, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Isabelle: In his fine speech, the hon. member for Lotbinière told us, if I understood well, that thanks to modern inventions, such as incubators and a many other devices, it was possible to preserve life or to extend it. Did he actually say that with those methods, the life of a four or five month foetus could be saved?

Mr. Fortin: Mr. Speaker, I did not catch the question of the hon. member for Hull and I apologize for it. Maybe the member for Hull is not used to speak in this house, because he does not speak loudly enough. Could he repeat his question?

Mr. Isabelle: I am going to put it again in French, Mr. Speaker. Did the hon. member for Lotbinière say in his speech that, with the means at the disposal of practitioners, and thanks to scientific advance 4 or 5 month-old fetuses can be saved?

Mr. Fortin: Mr. Speaker, I shall reply to the hon. member for Hull, who is also a doctor, that he knows the answer himself. I shall tell him that I was not afraid, as I said earlier, to consult people.