

*Government Orders*

and has a sex, either male or female. It immediately begins the growth process which continues from then on until adulthood.

Third, in the first week the division of the cells continue. Next, after 18 days the heartbeat can be detected. At 30 days, the foundations of the brain, spinal cord, nerves and sense organs are complete. There are eyes, ears, a mouth, kidneys, a liver and blood circulation. At 43 days brain waves can be detected. At six weeks nerves and muscles begin working together, the skeleton is fully formed but made of cartilage. Lips become sensitive to the touch. At seven weeks all internal organs are present. The stomach produces digestive juices, the liver manufactures red blood cells, the kidneys eliminate uric acid from the blood; the legs, ankles and toes are formed.

• (2020)

At eight weeks, lines of the hands develop that will remain as a distinctive feature throughout the entire life of an individual. At eight and a half weeks, the child squints, the fingers close into a fist if the palm is touched.

At 10 weeks the thyroid and adrenalin glands function. At 12 weeks, the child kicks, turns his feet and curls and fans his toes, swallows, inhales, exhales, sucks its thumb. From 16 to 20 weeks hair grows on the head, eyebrows and eyelashes appear, the child sleeps and wakes and it can be roused from sleep by external noises. And from there on, as you are well aware, it continues to grow and to mature.

In addition to that, the medical profession is now able to operate on the brain and urinary tract of an unborn child and a foetus can be kept alive in a hospital outside the mother's womb just 26 weeks from conception. I do not believe that any of those facts are in dispute by anyone, whether a scientist or a member of this House. No matter what side he be on, I have never heard anyone dispute those facts. It is on that basis that I have come to my own position, a pro-life position.

What we have before us tonight, Bill C-43, is a bill that has been arrived at after an awful lot of discussion and an awful lot of debate. Mr. Speaker, you are aware as I am of a good deal of that debate.

For me, it began in the last term of Parliament. It was one that caused an awful lot of emotion and concern

within the government caucus, it was one that was the subject of very lengthy debates. It was one that was subject not only to very lengthy debates but very emotional debates; debates in which each and every person on each and every conceivable side of this issue put their views very strongly, very firmly, very forcibly and very passionately.

It was not just within the government caucus. Certainly the same process took place within cabinet, within committees of caucus and within the caucus itself. Out of that has come this bill, Bill C-43.

There are certain aspects of this bill which I find appealing. This bill, for instance, makes the inducing of an abortion an offence under the Criminal Code. It also rejects the gestational approach to abortion and it recognizes implicitly, although not explicitly, the right to life from conception.

The problems that I have with this bill, as many other people have, is that unfortunately the bill's exemptions are far wider than I want. You know and I know and members of this House and the public know that the Prime Minister has said that in spite of their personal views all cabinet ministers must vote for this bill. I have wrestled with that issue very long and very hard. I spent a good many sleepless nights on this issue and I want to tell you I have not finished wrestling with it. I continue to wrestle with this issue.

I am one who believes that this bill needs quite a few amendments. Many have been suggested and I know that if and when it goes to committee there will be a number of amendments put forward.

There has been one in particular that I put forward the last time this matter was debated in this House in 1988. It has to do with the health care workers and a conscience clause for health care workers.

You may or may not remember that in the debate of 1988 on this subject, I indicated that I felt very strongly that any legislation with respect to abortion should include a conscience clause. That is a clause that would deal with the question of a health care worker's conscience. Many doctors, nurses and other health care workers firmly believe that in caring for pregnant women they actually have two patients, a mother and her unborn child. They do not want to participate in a procedure to terminate a pregnancy because it would conflict with their own moral beliefs and moral values.