

*Criminal Code*

Mr. Speaker, before adopting or rejecting the amendment, I think we must ask the following question—before I go any further I would ask the whip of the Liberal party to count his members, because there are less and less Liberals in the house.

**Mr. Boulanger:** Stop those platitudes!

**Mr. Fortin:** Mr. Speaker, the member for Mercier (Mr. Boulanger) wastes his time saying that we utter platitudes! Let him stop being so dull and still in his seat. Let him rise and speak! That would be interesting.

As for me, Mr. Speaker, in view of the many questions that we can rightly ask ourselves concerning the liberalization of homosexuality—when I see Liberal members, the word “homosexuality” comes to my mind, Mr. Speaker—but I mean the liberalization of abortion, in view of the number of questions we are entitled to ask ourselves as to the definition of the word “health”, if we take into account all the evidence we can find in libraries, the briefs which were submitted by the Medical Association, etc., and the consultations we had in our respective committees, and this, Mr. Speaker, throughout Quebec and Canada, one realizes that it is not a minority which is imposing its views to the majority. I would rather say it is a majority government which wants to impose its views to a majority of Canadians which are against the bill. Let us not reverse the roles, Mr. Speaker, let us be honest and recognize facts.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear.

**Mr. Fortin:** In support of what I say I will add this: a brief from the Quebec Association of Hospital Medical Boards contains a few interesting things regarding the bill on abortion. I would like the attention of the hon. members on the other side of the house, should they still be courageous enough to listen to us. I hope they are because up to now they have been rather narrow minded. At page 11, under the title: Medical data regarding the “health of the mother in abortion cases”, I quote:

The so-called therapeutic abortion is an abortion which is performed in order either to save the life of the mother, or to safeguard her health. Various laws use shades of meaning such as:

danger to life  
 danger to health  
 grave danger to health  
 danger to physical and mental health  
 certainty of foetal malformation  
 probability of foetal malformation, etc.

Before pursuing that most interesting and important quotation, I should like to tell this house which problems may crop up if we allow the words “or health” to remain in the bill.

As you can see, Mr. Speaker, many problems can arise; they are not imaginary or minor points but major ones. If we intend to fight and induce hon. members to examine the matter thoroughly, it is precisely because we believe that the words “or health” bring about problems, and not because we would promote political interests. We have no electoral fund and, on our side we do not land in helicopters to kiss girls.

First of all, let us say that cases where abortion is the only way to save the life of a pregnant woman have become exceedingly rare—

I repeat that point, Mr. Speaker, because it is extremely important.

First, let us say that cases where abortion is the only way to save the life of a pregnant woman have become exceedingly rare, not to say in-existent, because of the therapeutic means available.

I am not quoting the newspaper *Le Droit*, nor the Liberal or the Progressive Conservative parties, nor the Ralliement créditiste, Mr. Speaker, but the Quebec Association of Hospital Medical Boards. And I continue the quotation:

On the other hand, some people give a broader interpretation to the words “danger to life” and take into account the cases where it can be presumed that continuance of pregnancy might shorten the patient's life.

As concerns danger to health—

And this is where it becomes most interesting. As members of parliament, Mr. Speaker, it is extremely important that we hasten to study thoroughly the meaning of these words. I quote:

As for the danger to health, it presents a whole problem of interpretation, if we refer to the definition of health given by the World Health Organization: State of physical and mental well-being.

● (4:50 p.m.)

Mr. Speaker, I should like to have your co-operation in order to silence the hon. member for Mercier or to ask him to make a speech also. Only, I am tired of being interrupted unnecessarily and stupidly.

**Mr. Boulanger:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Béchard):** Order. The hon. member for Mercier is rising on a point of order.