On the other end of the spectrum a constituent writes:

> A civilized society does not kill one individual to alleviate another's problems. Canada must have a new law against abortion which will protect unborn children from conception to birth.

The Minister of National Health and Welfare said in his remarks in this debate:

> We have been elected by Canadians to choose the course which best balances the rights of everyone concerned.

Well, Mr. Minister, the rights of everyone concerned must also include those who cannot speak for themselves. The weakness of our Charter of Rights and Freedoms entrenched in the Canadian Constitution is that it does not include protection for the unborn.

I would like to pay tribute tonight to the late Dr. Stanley Hudecki who voted against the Constitution of Canada because it did not have that protection of the unborn built into it.

Many members in this debate used the excuse that because we do not live in an ideal world this bill is the best compromise and they will support it. We are the leaders of this great country. We are the guardians of this planet. If it is not an ideal world, then for heaven's sake is it not our role as legislators to bring in legislation to make this world as close as possible to the ideal world instead of destroying it even more? Again, if we are talking about an ideal world or something close to it, let us build in protection for all minorities including the unborn.

Canada should receive an additional 425,000 children each year. It receives only 360,000 because over 65,000 are aborted each year. What a stigma for a country, one that I am not proud of.

Recently the Prime Minister announced the Royal Commission on New Reproductive Technologies. What he should have established was a royal commission on why so many young mothers see abortion as the only solution to unwanted pregnancies.

Is it because of the lack of child care services and that women are afraid there will be no one to raise the child while they are out working? Or, is it because they are afraid to be caught in a poverty trap? Maybe it is time in our society for our politicians to think more creatively. For example, why can we not guarantee mothers of first and second born children a two-year paid maternity leave?

The Prime Minister should strike a royal commission that would provide recommendations to make adoption more appealing as an alternative to abortion. At present it takes five years to adopt a young child through government sponsored agencies. It takes only three months to adopt through questionable private agencies, and I say questionable because a young couple has to pay an average of $20,000 to adopt a young child. By aborting over 65,000 foetuses each year our society has created a supply management problem on the lives of adoptive children. Bill C-43 will keep the supply of adoptive children down so that the questionable adoption agencies can increase the price per head. That is not my idea of a just society.

To answer the debaters who argue that it is better to abort than have an unwanted child, I say nonsense. Thousands of couples are waiting to become parents through adoption. They will provide the shelter, the love, the security and the education that all children need. I speak as an adoptive parent. I am always reminded that if our daughter's mother would have believed in abortion we would not have Elaine today, a daughter who brings so much love and happiness to the whole family.

I would like to end by asking all hon. members a simple question: How many of us would be here today debating this bill if our mothers believed in abortion?

Mrs. Christine Stewart (Northumberland): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to address my comments to the legislation before us, Bill C-43, an act respecting abortion. It is not my usual habit to speak from notes, but since this is a very contentious bill and one in which there are subtleties of expression, I have written notes and I wish to refer to them so as not to have my meaning mistaken.

I must say that after only one year in this House I have not found any debate more stimulating than this one on the long awaited subject of abortion. I have found it stimulating because I recognize that more than usual, as each member speaks for him or herself, the truth about who they are as individuals in this place is revealed. It is a very emotional debate reflecting the seriousness of the matter for individual members and their constituents. Elections can be and were won and lost on this issue alone. However, it is also a fact that lives of future