committee of three members, to authorize abortions for such reasons as they choose.

Now, to go back to the letter sent by the Alliance for Life:

In Colorado, California and elsewhere, measures similar to this one have multiplied the number of abortions.

Out of one hundred abortions performed in hospitals, 90 are performed on the ground of "mental health", a rather lax phrase that covers anything and everything. We have been searching the minutes of the parliamentary committee of health and welfare to find out the different meanings of the words "mental health".

If there are more abortions performed in hospitals, this does not mean that there are less criminal abortions. In Great Britain, however liberal the law, the death rate due to criminal abortions is higher than that in Canada.

—as compared to the population ratio.

What is then the reason behind those changes? Clarifying the present law? Actually, adding words impossible to define will not help, in this respect. Will the law answer a pressing medical need? Doctors are the first to admit that there is no such need, as proven by the decreasing rate of postpartum deaths.

Today, that rate is only three deaths for 10,000 live births, that is less than a tenth of the 1940 rate.

The requests for abortion made to physicians are almost invariably for social reasons. Could it be that the changes proposed in the act are a concession to the pressures exerted by a small group of doctors who want to free themselves from any legal limitation?

We are told that a committee of physicians will decide whether, for a particular woman, there really is a sufficient hazard to warrant abortion. But as reported on page 543 of the proceedings of the standing committee on health and welfare in 1968, Dr. Walters said, and I quote:

If one considers the differences in the incidence of suicide throughout the world, one finds that the hospitals with the largest number of abortions are those with the most lenient committees. In a hospital with a yearly turnout of 20,000 deliveries, only a few abortions will take place to save the life of the mother. In another hospital with 10,000 deliveries, the number of abortions will be 40 times greater annually and the difference does not lie in the incidence of those abortions, but in the fact that if a woman is sent to that hospital, it is notorious that she will be able to get an abortion.

If the bill is passed, I anticipate two possible effects. On the one hand, if hospital committees give a narrow interpretation to the words "of the life or health of the mother", very few abortions will be allowed and the problem of illegal abortions will thus remain unchanged. On the other hand, with a somewhat wider definition of health, it will always be possible to allege a reason for finding it dangerous to continue the pregnancy. A law which lends itself to various interpretations and fails to ensure greater justice is incomplete.

In order to alleviate that problem of illegal abortion, it is our responsability to get to the bottom of things. Besides, it is the only way to expose the real causes of this alarming situation which should not exist in a vast and rich country like Canada.

And one of those grounds is connected with housing, especially in our large urban centers. Thanks to our great planning experts in this field, less and less of housing units are being built nowadays that are large enough to accommodate a normal family. They include, as a rule, a small kitchen, two bedrooms, one bath room and a living room. How can it ever be possible for an ordinary couple to house 5 or 6 people under such conditions?

Farmers care more for birds than society for the family. As a matter of fact, birds, especially swallows, build usually their nests in our farm buildings. They are allowed to build them in sufficient numbers and we do not worry about how many offsprings there are in the nests.

As far as children are concerned, they are being more and more ignored by modern society. It is an unfortunate fact and our society has nothing to boast about. But facts must be faced squarely if one is the realize that the situation has reached alarming proportions and often places couples in untenable positions which may be, if we really get to the bottom of things, a cause of abortion.

Another is sometimes the lack of understanding of the immediate family of the pregnant woman and this applies to every level of society, as well as to unwed mothers.

Furthermore, an insufficient income often gives rise to insuperable financial problems, and that situation gets worse from year to year because of the tribute people must pay, through governments, to the dictatorship of money and credit and to the golden calf.

In our ultramodern society, unfortunately, women are exposed to risks of all kinds, and that is another reason why we will have to find some solution, to apply in the first years of schooling on account of the great concentration of pupils at the same place, to what has become a serious problem for young girls. They are not sufficiently protected, unfortunately; school authorities do not watch them closely enough and too often, a number of