

*Government Orders*

allowed to trespass. The role of the courts is to map out, piece by piece, the parameters of the fence”.

Respect for individual decision-making in matters of fundamental personal importance is how Madam Justice Wilson summarizes the philosophy underlining the Charter and indeed our democratic traditions. She decides that these rights apply to women and, in particular, to a woman's decision to terminate a pregnancy.

She explains why only a woman can make this decision in language which I feel bears repeating in this House:

This decision is one that will have profound psychological, economic and social consequences for the pregnant woman. The circumstances giving rise to it can be complex and varied and there may be, and usually are, powerful considerations militating in opposite directions. It is a decision that deeply affects the way the woman thinks about herself and her relationship to others and to society at large. It is not just a medical decision; it is a profound social and ethical one as well. Her response to it will be the response of the whole person.

I agree with Madam Justice Wilson that a woman's decision to terminate her pregnancy is a fundamental human right protected by the charter and by her democratic traditions. This bill denies this right and therefore I cannot support it.

Indeed, the bill makes abortion illegal. Rather than assuring access to safe abortion services throughout Canada, the government reduces access by threatening doctors with criminal action. It makes women possible accessories to a crime. It invites third party interventions. It fails to address prevention or unwanted pregnancies. It is a given that we all want to reduce the numbers of abortions but this bill will not reduce the numbers of abortion. Every year there are about 360,000 births and about 65,000 abortions in Canada. I do not think that any member of this House can seriously maintain that we can significantly reduce the number of abortions by prohibition or by criminalizing abortion. I would remind hon. members abortions are illegal in Ireland but that that country has one of the highest abortion rates in the world. To reduce the number of abortions we have to on the one hand reduce the number of unwanted pregnancies and on the other hand ensure that women who decide to carry their pregnancy to term know that they are doing so in a supportive environment.

The only effective tool for the prevention of unwanted pregnancies is education, particularly for our most vulnerable group, the young. As a society we must address prevention in an active fashion. We must increase education about responsible sexuality. We must increase the involvement of men in family planning and support continued research into acceptable and safe birth control measures for both men and women.

I certainly agree that the state has a legitimate interest in protecting potential children and members of society but this rings hollow when women cannot find adequate day care, when single parent women are among the poorest people in Canada and when one in six Canadian children is being raised in poverty.

**Hon. Alan Redway (Minister of State (Housing)):** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to say a few words in connection with Bill C-43, an act with respect to abortion. It is a matter which is very controversial and very sensitive.

My own views on this subject are very well known indeed. As you may be aware, I was nominated to stand for Parliament back in 1982. I spent some two years going door to door in my constituency and at many of those doors I was asked the question where I stood on this issue. On each and every occasion I indicated that I stood on the pro-life side of the issue.

That was not the last time that my views were made known because during the last term of Parliament I frequently rose in this House and made statements on the subject, all of which reflected my own views and personal beliefs, that of a pro-life position. I might say that about a year ago, last Christmas, I was nominated by a well-known radio broadcaster in the city of Toronto as the creep of the year as a result of my pro-life position. I base my own position very clearly on what I think and believe are undisputed medical facts with respect to this matter.

First of all, as I understand it, and I do not believe it is disputed in any way medically or scientifically, immediately upon the union of a man's sperm with a woman's egg, that is fertilization, cellular development begins. Second, the sex is determined at the single cell stage by the X and Y chromosomes carried in the father's sperm cell. At the single cell stage the egg is alive and is human