

*Criminal Code*

few who will exert influence on such committees; it is therefore quite important to distrust them. By requiring the unanimous consent of the abortion committee in accredited hospitals, we would thus secure a better guarantee than by leaving the clause in its present form.

I did not say that those sham practitioners were physicians, even if it is possible for physicians to turn quickly into sham practitioners when they take cover under their specialization to uphold views which strictly have no direct or causal connection with their competence. As for the argument about figures put forward by Dr. Jobin in his letter, it is entirely his own. It is not with such computations that we can prove the basic truth of a statement.

Dr. Jobin can also claim full ownership of his gratuitous innuendoes about his medical colleagues who do not think as he does on the question of abortion.

As you can see, Mr. Speaker I was in order.

I wanted to show the present disagreement among physicians. A great number of them, and the majority in Quebec, are against abortion. They have various reasons but one of them is that therapeutic abortion is no longer necessary today. That is what Dr. Noel Walsh said and I quote:

This leads me to refer to the relationships between psychiatry and abortion. As you may know, according to obstetricians and physicians, medical and obstetric indications justifying abortion have practically disappeared and mostly, favourable indications to be expected in the future will be of a psychiatric nature. The question we must ask ourselves, then, is: Are there any psychiatric grounds for abortion?

Here again, you can appreciate the problem, Mr. Speaker, since there is no longer such a thing as therapeutic abortion. This is one of the main reasons why we are so much opposed to the present bill. The way we have insisted and come back to the same subject these last few days proves we are dealing with blockheads—if I may use the expression. All obstetricians and all physicians quoted are not *Créditistes*, Mr. Speaker, but people who are mainly concerned with this important problem of abortion. We have no objection against therapeutic abortion, provided the bill has no serious consequences.

We do not object to therapeutic abortion, Mr. Speaker, for the simple reason that it no longer exists. With medical progress, abortion is now uncalled for. If it were a matter of life and death for a pregnant woman, if a choice had to be made between the life of the foetus

and her own life, we would not be opposed, then, to the doctor making use of all treatments required to try to save the life of the mother and at the same time the life of the foetus. We have no objection to that and we do not understand why so much time must be wasted on a question that medical science is on the point of solving definitely.

If doctors themselves hold such opinions, you will readily understand that they have some doubt as to the usefulness of the bill as it now reads. It would have been possible to legislate about abortion but in an acceptable manner.

It would have been sufficient to delete one small thing from the Criminal Code, that is the possibility of instituting proceedings against a doctor who, because of the treatments given by him to a pregnant woman, has caused an abortion.

At the present time, nothing prevents that woman or some other persons from suing the doctor. That was the only point that needed to be dealt with. There was no need to authorize or to legalize abortion on such and such a pretext.

As I just said, several doctors were in favour of abortion. Others are much more broad-minded, and claim that individual freedom would allow a woman to get rid of a foetus she is bearing, just like having a tooth pulled.

Mr. Speaker, there are all kinds of people in any profession, including the medical profession. It is to be wondered why they are more influential, and why their opinions are mostly retained.

That medical committee could always find somebody who would be either against or for abortion. So, it would then be necessary, in order to ensure an accurate diagnosis, to require unanimity. That would be a formal guarantee which, in my opinion, should have been considered much more seriously.

In so vital and so essential a matter as the one under consideration, it is extremely unfortunate to see some members take it so lightly as to call this debate a public mockery. I think it is extremely disastrous for the house to find that for some members the right to live of future generations is not worth anything more than that.

As far as we are concerned, it is to think of the people of the future, of the thousands or millions of people of the future who will not come to life because abortion is being legalized, is much more serious than just a mockery.