because of the fault of the foetus, but because of the intervention of men and women who induce abortion.

How then can the foetus defend himself or herself against such an argument? We who can speak, who can feel, who have been given life, must now speak for those who cannot speak for themselves. From the moment of conception an individual will increase in size, will increase in the degree of development, but he or she remains essentially the same individual from conception until death.

Regardless of personal inconvenience or personal preference, a physician, including myself because of my medical background, or even a prospective mother should not be able to take the life of the unborn child at will. If there is genuine threat to the life of the pregnant mother, all medical attempts must be made to save the lives, not of one, but to save the lives of both. Fortunately, from the medical point of view, carrying a pregnancy to term usually poses no such threat to the pregnant woman. Normally there is no competition for life between a mother and her unborn child. What is good for the health of the mother is good for the foetus and carrying a baby to term is usually in the best interests of not only the woman herself, of her family, but also of society as a whole.

Already there exist laws which indirectly protect the foetus. In penal law, it is a criminal offence for a third person to attack a foetus against the will of the pregnant woman. Also, harsher penalties are levelled against the murderer of a pregnant woman. Protection of the foetus through the protection of a pregnant woman is reflected in labour law. Yes, there exists legal protection of the foetus in penal, administrative, labour and civil laws. As members of Parliament it is our duty to pass appropriate legislation to protect the unborn child.

Some people will suggest that even if aborting a foetus is not a physical or mental health imperative, it should nonetheless be allowed as an economic imperative. I disagree most strongly but politely with the idea that we can ever put an economic price tag on human life. We should support, instead, improved programs for pregnant women and improved programs for new born babies and older children. We should facilitate adoptions and we must encourage men to be more responsible for birth control and, in the event of pregnancy, more responsible in terms of child support. If a child is unwanted by the mother this does not mean that the child is unwanted. A child will be wanted by the father or by the grandparents or by thousands of childless couples trying to adopt.

The mother has the opportunity of giving a lifetime of happiness to individuals unable to have their own children, who will love and cherish the adopted child as if he or she were their own.

Some will say that induced, non-therapeutic abortions will take place even if they are only allowed on therapeutic grounds, and that they will then take place in unsanitary and unsafe conditions at exorbitant prices.

As a medical doctor by background, I am deeply concerned indeed. I believe if we are interested in saving the lives of the unborn we should not be making it cheaper and safer to terminate their lives.

Pregnancy is not a disease. It is a natural and wonderful gift of life. We must use all methods to reduce the number of abortions, not only legal methods. These methods include better education and better support services such as day care, counselling services and adequate housing for the poor. We must identify the bases of why we ask for abortion. When we have identified the causes, then we as a government, as a society, must provide the necessary societal solutions. The government must exercise federal leadership to the extent that when a therapeutic procedure of any kind is indicated, those medical services must be available to all Canadians in every corner of this country. But on an issue of fundamental values, first and foremost the right to life, we must not hesitate to legislate in the interests of society.

Just because people will drink and drive regardless of legislation does not mean that we should not legislate. Just because some induced non-therapeutic abortions will take place regardless of legislation to the contrary does not mean that we should not legislate. That a law will be broken, is no argument against enacting such a law.

Some people will suggest that a child should not be born into poverty or a bad family, that such a life is not worth living. The adoption choice aside, is it not presumptuous for us to judge what kind of life is worth living and what kind is not? The issue of abortion involves two lives, not just one, and both lives must be protected whenever possible. Medical science has proven that life is a continuum from conception till death, and to