

Criminal Code

On the other hand, if the legislation or the clause we have at present allow abortion when life is endangered and it is not a crime, I am satisfied.

Mr. Speaker, I wonder why people want to go farther. And who wants it? What actually can endanger health? A nervous break-down? A headache? What does it mean? I do not quite understand.

This debate has not really answered that question. The word "health" was not defined clearly enough for me to accept clause 18.

The decision will be made by a committee of medical practitioners. Why not by one doctor only, who would bring common sense into play? If it is now a crime for a doctor to procure abortion, let us simply amend that part of the law.

Abortion should not be allowed for whichever reason comes to mind. That is why the word "health" has not yet been defined, in my opinion. I do not know what is meant by the word "health". It is that part of the law that worries me.

I object to the bandying about of all-too-handy reasons to justify the plucking of the infant from his mother's womb, and thus his murder.

As I said, there are reasons. If there are sufficient and serious reasons, let abortion be performed. This bill is a little too permissive, in my opinion.

Nobody said anything about the father of the child. I think that is also very important.

Clause 18 of the bill, in my opinion, is too liberal with a small "I" or perhaps with a capital "L".

At any rate, in allowing such things to take place, society urges us forward. It becomes too liberal for me. They want to change everything. Universities are a good illustration of that. Nothing is worth-while anymore. And so, down with everything.

No Mr. Speaker, there are still some things we should preserve; we could improve them perhaps, but let us not be too selfish and only think of number one, without giving a thought to anybody else.

Time has come to assume our responsibilities and, above all, to make our country a place in which it is good to be born.

We must and we can create a society which will care for unwanted children, but—and this is very important—before passing such a legislation, we should educate the mothers so that they and their children, might have a place in this world of ours.

Yes, Mr. Speaker, we are given too much licence. This bill is pushing us even further. As far as I am concerned, suffice it to say that if a doctor feels that an abortion is necessary, let him procure it out without committing legally a crime. In my view, the present law says so. That is why I am in favour of the amendment, or against clause 18.

A free vote has been called for. I submit that if the majority of Canadians wanted such a legislation, there would be no problem, even if we were allowed to vote freely on the matter, because the bill would be passed anyhow.

Mr. Charles-Eugène Dionne (Kamouraska): Mr. Speaker, it should not prove difficult to justify my intervention in this debate, considering the great number of representations we have received and also some facts that I shall have the opportunity of bringing to light during my speech.

I felt the government would give a great deal more attention to the numerous representations made by various important and impartial organizations on behalf of thousands of citizens. I have tried to understand the reasons that might justify the government in taking such action.

I listened to and read the speeches of the supporters of this bill and I also took into account the valid arguments of those who oppose it. I have done a great deal of reading which enabled me to judge the situation better: the ideas and principles expressed by ancient and modern thinkers, that required at times more than a superficial look.

We cannot always make decisions that meet our wishes. The main point in making a decision is that it be supported by facts. Any man is entitled to his own opinion, but no one is allowed to be mistaken as regards evidence. I think that you will agree with me that these two things are quite different from one another: the facts are controllable and remain unchanged, whoever refers to them, whereas each individual has his opinion. Let us beware of a false objectivity seeking only the happy medium between two divergent opinions, no matter where the truth lies.

I have before me an article entitled "The English people are worried about their abortion legislation", which appeared in the newspaper *L'Action* on April 15, 1969, and I quote:

The way the legislation permitting abortion under certain circumstances is now applied arouses "serious concern, even among its supporters", said