

*Criminal Code*

unanimous. Then there would not be any possible ambiguity.

As the hon. member for Hull pointed out, the danger in this amendment lies in the fact that in cases where the committee will refuse an abortion in the light of the reasons given, then the woman or the young girl requesting the abortion for health reasons, whether physical or mental, will probably go to a quack and that will not settle in any way the problem we want to solve by this amendment.

Mr. Speaker, it is for these reasons that I support the amendment moved by my colleague from Beauce (Mr. Rodrigue) and I believe the other members should do the same when the vote is taken.

**Mr. René Maïte (Champlain):** Mr. Speaker, we are once again considering an amendment which the Minister of Justice (Mr. Turner) could have looked at from another standpoint.

We support this amendment on the ground that doctors themselves have a great deal of difficulty reaching complete agreement on the nature of abortion and that the law would protect them further if it required unanimous agreement within the committee whose duty it will be to decide whether or not a female person should be aborted.

Mr. Speaker, by demanding unanimity, we feel sure that the committee will not be faced with a situation which would result in decisions based on uncertainties. The amendments increasing the number of responsible members within the abortion committee have been written off so that the committee will be made up of three members, instead of four or even five.

Therefore, it is most important, if only three doctors remain on the board, that those three be unanimous in their decision, so that in a field as serious as human life, a less conscientious doctor should not be left to influence the others unduly.

Mr. Speaker, that is perhaps the reason why, some time ago, the editorial writer Claude Ryan, of the newspaper *Le Devoir*, referred to those sham practitioners who, for a year or a year and a half now, have flooded radio and particularly television—mostly our national system—with their views on abortion. For one doctor who favours abortion, and on request, there are thousands of others who have had no opportunity to express their own opinions publicly. Those sham practitioners were the ones alluded to by the journalist.

Now, the very same newspaper *Le Devoir*, mentioned by my friend the hon. member

[Mr. Laprise.]

for Lotbinière (Mr. Fortin) a while ago, has published also a letter from Dr. Maurice Jobin, who supports abortion. In that letter, Dr. Jobin took exception to Mr. Ryan's condemnation of sham practitioners.

And Mr. Ryan, in a foot-note to Dr. Jobin's letter said this, and I quote:

I wrote and I repeat that too many sham practitioners flood the air with their superficial talk on extremely complex and delicate subjects such as abortion.

[English]

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Order, please. I am sorry to interrupt the hon. member but I must remind him that the motion we are considering deals with the question of whether the decision of the therapeutic abortion committee ought to be unanimous. I do not wish to restrict the right of the hon. member to speak on the motion but, so far as possible, I feel he ought to confine his remarks to the specific motion now being considered.

[Translation]

**Mr. Maïte:** Mr. Speaker, thank you for your remarks, but the purpose of my intervention is to show it is important that the committee be unanimous, because doctors do not all share the same views and we require unanimity to avoid a situation where two doctors on the committee might be in favour of abortion for some women, while the third would be against. Such a situation, if it arises would be exceptional and would be frowned upon at first.

It is impossible, when human lives are concerned, when the right to live is involved to ignore  $3\frac{1}{3}$ —since one out of three would represent  $3\frac{1}{3}$ —who might be right, and to leave it to two out of three to make that decision. It would be a serious mistake to leave things as they are, since an indefeasible and unquestionable right is involved the right to live of a person of 90, 100, 101, as well as of a person of 50, 10, 9 years and that right also exists for a human being still in his mother's womb. This is our opinion and many physicians, especially those who have studied genetics, agree with us. They tell us that life begins at the time of impregnation when the impregnated ovule is actually implanted in the womb.

● (4:10 p.m.)

Mr. Speaker, as far as unanimity is concerned I would like to denounce, along with the editor of *Le Devoir*, Claude Ryan, the sham practitioners. There will always be a