

Criminal Code

discuss this bill. The directors of the Association studied all the opinions expressed and they would be glad to submit their conclusions on abortion and on this bill.

We do not base them on the opinions of a couple of doctors, or on those of a small group but on that of all the doctors of a province as a whole, which is, in itself, a nation. Are we going to disregard all that? It would be far better, Mr. Speaker, to grant the provinces the right to legislate on that matter, in spite of the Criminal Code. Let Quebec become independent, if it has to! If we are to accept everything that is going on here, within this chamber which is on the way to becoming a modern Sodom and Gomorrah, I understand better still those who promote the independence of Quebec and want all the Quebecers to be sole judges of what they have to do, according to their own way of thinking.

Such are, Mr. Speaker, the arguments that come to my mind following this brief submitted by all the doctors of Quebec as a whole, a brief simply pooh-poohed by the Minister of Justice (Mr. Turner).

The doctors of the Quebec hospitals believe that any abortion is a homicide, that the foetus is a human being. Should therefore people who hold such a belief be compelled to perform abortion? That is what we want to prevent by the proposed amendment. I cannot help thinking, Mr. Speaker, how strange it is that something which appears to me so logical, so sensible and so clear will of course be rejected. Nothing could be more stupid.

I revert to what I said at the beginning, Mr. Speaker, namely, that the problem is to find means to convince those people. I have been wondering about that for ten months, for we refuse to believe what the newspapers said last week, to wit, that most people favour abortion. We have received indications to the contrary as late as this morning, at least from the province of Quebec.

I am more and more convinced that sooner or later those opposing the controversial sections of Bill C-150, even those who, at the present time, yield to Trudeau madness, Trudeaumania or anything that issues from Trudeau this or Trudeau that, and who, for that very reason, have up to now deemed it appropriate to approve abortion, will in the end endorse our opinion.

The Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) said earlier about the resignation of the French president that politicians' careers were short-lived.

[Mr. Matte.]

It seems that a political career is not so short-lived! For him a 10 year period is short, because he expects himself to remain in office for at least 10 years. Mr. Speaker, I do not think he will do so because, before 10 years, we shall already have noticed the disastrous effects of the decisions we are about to take in the house. It will take much less time to realize we were mistaken in legalizing abortion, on which we did not have enough information, and in failing to follow the advice of great scientists.

That is why we will be accused of playing politics, of filibustering and of making a political football of this issue. They are all wrong because, in fact, all our arguments are based on medical science. Let us stop shifting the problem and considering only its social aspect. By legalizing abortion it is sought to safeguard the practitioners' prerogatives, rather than discuss the social aspect of the problem.

It is sad to see a young girl pregnant. It is not very interesting either to find that a mother with too many children has not enough money to raise them properly. Such considerations are reasonable but they have nothing to do with the subject now under discussion.

• (4:00 p.m.)

What we want to determine now is, whether abortion is something normal or whether it is homicide. In our opinion, of course, it is homicide. We did not consider exclusively, however, our religious beliefs. We wanted to find out what the greatest authorities had to say and we know now that medicine and science are entirely on our side.

According to the present teaching of the medical science, the foetus is a living human being which has the right to live, like every other human being. Even from the legal point of view, the foetus is already considered as a full human being, since it can become an heir and since the State still considers non therapeutic abortion as a crime punishable by life imprisonment.

It is admitted by all serious gynaecologists that the cases where therapeutic abortion would really save the life of the mother have become extremely rare thanks to the progress of science in this field.

[English]

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I am sorry to interrupt the hon. member but his time has expired.