

Criminal Code

bill legalizing abortions and explain a number of points.

We know that that phrase should be replaced by this one: "when the mother gives her life so that a human being may have a chance to start his own". That is what the Ralliement Cr ditiste proposes.

As I said at the beginning, we would like at least this amendment to be carried.

The hon. minister has no doubt received a great deal of protests, and this is why I am convinced that he will at least accept this amendment. As a matter of fact, the revised edition of the bill to be introduced in the house is now being printed. As to the comments made to us, they are in favour of the adoption of this amendment.

The Canadian Association of Catholic hospitals, representing 300 hospitals, requested that the amendments which would have to be made to the legislation be not studied before the whole question had been thoroughly considered and more effective research undertaken by the government.

This is the information we received. The minister must also have received it. A translation had been prepared. Since the amendments were proposed by members of his party, he is willing to accept them.

Besides, the brief dealt mainly with the importance of the administrative aspects, that is to say of the real problems faced by hospitals, should parliament, without analyzing beforehand all possible consequences, hastily legalize a practice which the majority of the population consider not only revolting but contrary to the common good of the country.

As far as the amendment moved today is concerned, I could quote a statement made by the Catholic bishops. It says, and I quote:

God, Master of life, entrusted man with the noble ministry of giving life; man must therefore carry it out in a manner worthy of himself. Life must be carefully preserved from the moment of conception. Abortion and child-murder are abominable crimes.

And the brief states further:

The advancement of civilization, we say it firmly, lies in the recognition always clearer, both theoretical and practical, of the dignity of the human being, of its sacred character and of its absolute inviolability.

Everything leads us to believe that it is illusory to think that the proposed amendment by the enactment of a law will bring about a reduction in the number of clandestine abortions. Here again, the experience made in a few countries where legislation has already been approved, similar to the

one that is proposed here, shows that the contrary is to be feared. But could it be otherwise? With a law that belittles, by the very exceptions that it accepts, the right of the foetus to live, it promotes the development of a permissive attitude that no longer considers abortion as a real crime. Here is where one should be reminded that the lawmaker must not underestimate the educational value of the law. People are indeed easily led to consider as morally acceptable what the law itself allows.

It always rests with the lawmakers alone to find realistic means of adjusting their convictions to the often complex situations of current life. They should not passively wait for the Church to come to their rescue, at this connection; but, on the contrary, they must—in co-operation with their colleagues—endeavour to find efficient means of promoting the common good, especially through the drawing up and the enactment of wise and just laws.

Instead of unjust laws.

I have here the report of an inquiry conducted in United States. Everyone knows that in United States, where the people have a rather liberal mentality, several States have adopted measures to allow abortion for reasons other than the health of the mother, as for example, eugenics, incest, poverty of the family and other social and economical reasons. A woman who is not pregnant from her husband can get an abortion. However, people are not ready to accept abortion for such reasons. They accept it largely when the mother's health is in serious danger.

On the other hand, 56 per cent only of the people are in favour of abortion in case of malformation of a child.

On the other hand, they are against abortion requested for economical reasons, as for instance when a family income is so low that the family cannot be brought up properly—

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Dumont: Refusal in 77 per cent—

Mr. Speaker: It is with a deep regret that I interrupt once more the hon. member to remind him again that he must limit his remarks, under the standing orders, to the amendment before us.

The hon. member is dealing with abortion in a very general way. That is not the object of the amendment under consideration. As I said a while ago, the hon. member may speak during the time allotted under the rules, but on the other hand, he must limit his remarks to the subject before us.