

"productive" is the right word in this context. I certainly look forward to listening to his contribution.

First of all, in respect of what the hon. member has just said, I feel there is absolutely no doubt about the merits of many of the points she has made. It is an unfortunate commentary on the procedure that private members, under the existing rules of this chamber, must go through such a tortuous route in order to comment on subjects which are of importance. Often we are trapped by somewhat archaic parliamentary procedures into having to comment on subjects of importance by the most circuitous route. The hon. member addressed herself to the relationship of family planning to the report on the status of women, to the prevention of unwanted pregnancies and to the situation so far as abortion is concerned. In this regard, her remarks had a great deal of merit. I would perhaps go further than she has. I am one of those who have a fundamental difficulty in principle in respect of the idea of abortion, and particularly the idea of abortion on demand, simply because I hold the belief that a human life begins at the moment of conception and accordingly we do not have the right to take that human life for the convenience of other human beings.

• (5:20 p.m.)

Be that as it may, I believe that something should be done in respect of the terrible tragedy involved in attempts to terminate unwanted pregnancies and the dangers involved in the carrying out of abortive procedures in hazardous circumstances and by surreptitious procedures. The hon. member has frequently delivered weighty arguments on this subject, and I agree that a great deal can and should be done in this regard. I feel the positive action which should be taken in respect of this danger and evil which exists in our society is not by liberalizing the laws in respect of abortion, but rather by doing two things. One of these I believe is a good deal more possible than the other. The first thing I have in mind is counselling on family planning and contraception. The second is, if I am correct in the theory that we must protect human life when it begins, notwithstanding the fact that it begins in circumstances which may inconvenience the parent or parents, that we should be taking steps to eliminate the social stigma we place upon children born out of wedlock.

Of these two steps, expanded counselling and family planning in respect of contraception certainly is within our grasp. This is a realistic possibility and certainly is a positive step which could be taken in an attempt to encourage a social climate which would eliminate the pressures we place upon unwed mothers and children born out of wedlock. This is by no means a project which is easy to achieve because obviously there are so many areas and factors which influence people's opinions, prejudices and views on morality and on the proprieties of such things. So, leaving that as an area which presents enormous difficulties and turning to the area with which the hon. member is concerned in this particular discussion, I endorse the idea of expanded information and clinics because I continue to be amazed, as I believe most

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mature people are, by the frequency of the total ignorance of people who are fairly mature otherwise concerning the basic fundamentals of gestation, conception or the nature of childbirth and everything connected with it. When we see these terrible examples of young girls who have found themselves in circumstances which for one reason or another have driven them to abortion, frequently we find they are astonishingly ignorant of the basic principles of conception and the birth of a child. So, I totally endorse the idea of expanded information in that regard through clinics such as we are talking about.

Returning to the subject matter of the notice of motion, I lament the fact that hon. members are forced to follow this procedure in order to discuss a subject in which there is a great deal of interest. However, we cannot forget the fact that this is being done through the device of a notice of motion for the production of documents. It is not here and now a question of whether or not the government endorses the kind of policies the hon. member is bringing forward. I believe it is fair to say the Minister of National Health and Welfare (Mr. Munro) has been as active in this field as he has been in all others which embrace his huge portfolio. It is well established that he is a progressive individual and is forward-thinking. I do not doubt for a moment that he would welcome an opportunity to discuss the kind of clinics the hon. member suggests and I am sure his department is working actively on this.

We are all hopeful that such work can go forward. So, the question we are debating here really is not the merit or lack of it of this subject but rather whether the government is right in failing to produce the studies it has commissioned on this subject. On that aspect of the matter, I shall address myself to three brief headings. First, I believe we must all agree it is desirable that this or any other government attempt to get outside of its own bureaucracy and outside of its own so often stiff and stultified machinery. The use of such research projects and studies gives the government the opportunity for flexibility by having other agencies working and studying subjects so far as possible away from the identification of government and officialdom. If it is desirable that the government proceed in this way to inform itself concerning problems of depth and frequency, then surely the hon. member will go one step further and agree that the freedom and flexibility desired in connection with such a study would be seriously impaired if every study commissioned by the government on this or on any other subject had to be done with the knowledge that it would be published as part of the government record and become a public document.

In respect of the report, for example, on the status of women concerning which it was known from the beginning the document would be public, we know very well that the kind of work that went into it had to be much more careful, prolonged and all-embracing in an official way. In such a case we know there must be safeguards and steps taken to see that everyone wishing to present views has an opportunity to do so, and that everyone who wants to contribute to an official public study should have an opportunity to do so. That might be fine for the