Setting pure ideology aside, one must be practical. So, Mr. Speaker, although I entertain reservations about some provisions, even if I have reservations about criminalizing, however lenient it may be, there is no doubt in my mind that as Member for Mégantic—Compton—Stanstead I must support and vote in favour of this bill. I agree with the Leader of the Opposition that the legislative committee will have to give serious consideration to this measure and improve it if possible. But basically I agree with the principles and the way this bill has been drafted.

[*English*]

Ms. Black: I thank the member opposite on the government side for his comments today. He showed great sensitivity to women and to how they feel about this particular issue. Most women in Canada view this issue of abortion and right to reproductive choice and freedom as the key indicator of women's emancipation, women's freedom in Canada.

More than 50 per cent of our population are women and they think of this issue as one where you cannot be a little bit pregnant, you also cannot be a little bit held under the Criminal Code. You are a full and equal citizen in this country, a citizen who is able to make her own decision under her own priorities and concerns, and not under the criteria established by a criminal law.

The member indicated that this was the best kind of a compromise that we could achieve in Canada around the issue of abortion. He also indicated that this bill would prevent the horror that we witnessed this summer with the Daigle case where we saw the very private details of a woman's life displayed across the media of this country. We saw her pain and her suffering as she struggled with this issue herself. We saw the courts in Quebec obstructing her and in some ways harassing her as she went through a terrible time.

I wonder how the member feels this criminal legislation will prevent that kind of spectacle again. It is my understanding that the injunctions that were held over Miss Daigle were done under civil law. This is criminal law that we are discussing here in the Chamber today. My understanding is that criminal law will not prevent civil injunction. In fact, one of my big concerns with this legislation is that we are handing another legal tool to the small majority of people in the Canadian population who would use any means and we have seen what they have done over many months to prevent a woman from exercising her own choice on her own reproductive health and the choice that she makes about becoming a mother. I would ask the member how he sees this criminal legislation preventing civil injunctions. How does he see this criminal legislation improving the situation for women in Canada? I simply do not believe that it does. I believe that it will diminish access and make the situation worse for women in Canada.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Gérin: Last summer, when the Supreme Court considered the court injunction in the Chantal Daigle case, it took not more than 30 minutes or three-quarters of an hour, I believe, to hand down its decision. One cannot request a court injunction on those grounds. That was established at a time when there was no legislation on abortion. So I imagine that answers your question, if in addition to the Supreme Court decision, whose reasons have yet to be published, we have this legislation as well. I think this is particularly important, because I believe that NDP Members, generally speaking, are in favour of having no legislation at all. They would prefer to leave it up to the woman, but now they will have to vote—I hope it will be a free vote for them as well—and I hope that women Members in the NDP caucus will demand a free vote and that when they do vote, they will consider this short quote, my last one by the same Lysiane Gagnon. I think she will appreciate this, and I hope she will return the favour in her next article:

"Instead of arguing about the semantics of the issue, feminists groups should set up effective lobbies to meet Members of Parliament and try and increase support for this Bill which, considering the realities, is the most progressive piece of legislation we could have. In any case, the Pro-Life lobbies won't waste any time".

[*English*]

Mr. Karpoff: Mr. Speaker, I find the member's comments very interesting. I think that he has thought them through a great deal. I certainly appreciate his sensitivity and his wish to make it as free and easy for a woman to terminate a pregnancy. I am quite intrigued that, as a lawyer, his interpretation of the bill is that if a woman sought an abortion, did not qualify for it on the grounds of a threat to medical health and was turned down, that would be psychologically hard on her and, therefore, her