

Abortion

Finally, it is extremely difficult to respond to a specific motion, some parts of which I agree with and some parts of which I do not agree with. My own Party is putting forward an amendment which reflects the majority view of the caucus. I do not share it entirely although I share parts of that approach. I believe that many of us find that when we work out our philosophy it does not entirely fit the mold of any particular organization.

In conclusion, I hope that we will have a good discussion throughout the couple of days during which we will be considering this issue. I hope there will be good amendments moved. I hope we can proceed in an orderly fashion to deal with the issue. We will never reach a solution which will have 100 per cent or even an enormous amount of consensus. We are going to be divided, but we must come up with a solution which will be acceptable to a very broad range of Canadians. We will have to deal with those differences in a constructive way. I hope that we will proceed to deal with the root cause of a recourse to abortion, that is, the unwanted pregnancy. I hope we will be much more vigorous in dealing with those in a constructive way.

Mr. Bill Domm (Peterborough): Mr. Speaker, I approach this subject with a great deal of difficulty. I have a major concern with the situation in which we now find ourselves. We have before us a government motion which clearly calls for protection during the gestation period. If we as pro-life supporters were to say that we cannot live with that condition and were to vote against the motion of the Government, we would in turn find ourselves faced directly with abortion on demand. As a result of the Supreme Court decision, we have in Canada today a rapid growth industry known as free-standing abortion clinics under another name.

I would like to talk about Peterborough for a moment. Since the Supreme Court decision was announced the provincial Government has intentionally moved to establish clinics in Ontario which will operate as extensions of hospitals and give consultation to expectant mothers and then offer the service of abortion. This is being done in a great number of communities against the will, in my perception, of the majority of those communities.

In the City of Peterborough the provincial Government moved in against large demonstrations, candle-light vigils, and marches on the hospitals and announced its intention, through the provincial Minister of Health, to open a free-standing clinic as an extension of the Civic Hospital and fund that clinic to the extent of \$800,000. This was at a time when it announced to the other Peterborough hospital, St. Joseph's Hospital, which is a Catholic hospital that will not perform abortions, that it did not have the money to assist it in a \$400,000 over expenditure.

It could find some \$800,000 to open this clinic to offer a service of consultation to expectant mothers when the medical profession in the City of Peterborough is currently offering those services. This new free-standing clinic was going to do that at a cost of \$800,000 for the Civic Hospital when the provincial government could not find \$400,000 to cover the

deficit of St. Joseph's Hospital, forcing it to close beds, reduce services, and reduce operating procedures.

If that is not bad enough, add to it that as a result of the desire to find doctors in Peterborough who will perform abortions, the provincial Government has allocated funds to this free-standing clinic to train doctors to perform abortions. In the City of Peterborough there is only one medical doctor who will perform all abortions. In addition to that there is one doctor who will perform abortions for his patients only.

Part of the reason I am having so much difficulty with the abortion issue is that a lot of my personal friends, male and female, are medical doctors. My wife is a registered nurse. The situation within the medical profession has become so bad that a great number of doctors have decided that they can no longer recommend to boards that abortions should occur. Part of the reason for that is that they see young people who have had not only one abortion but two and in some cases, although not a large number, three abortions as a means of birth control.

There are two things which we must consider.

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One is whether society is ready today to accept the fact that abortion is the norm and there should be free-standing clinics and abortion on demand. Some people tell me that they know I have fought for the return of capital punishment, and have shown by my interest in the return of capital punishment a lack of respect as it pertains to human life through the execution of the convict.

I thought about that for a long time. I answer my constituents by saying that when I deal with a convicted murderer I deal with someone who has been convicted as guilty and to take that life as a penalty that fits the crime is a reasonable form of justice available to Parliament to consider in the form of legislation. I ask the abolitionists who, in a number of cases, happen to support abortion, why they have so much respect for the proven guilty, like the Clifford Olsons, and so little respect for the life of the unborn child. That sort of analogy shows the difficulty facing Members of Parliament with this very controversial issue.

I find it difficult to deal with the Criminal Code and its sections that bring with them the penalties of law when we have a Constitution in Canada that is mute on the protection of the unborn child. That is why in the past year I have appreciated the opportunity to support Private Members' Bills that have called upon the Government of Canada to take to a First Ministers' Conference, as a priority, changes to the Constitution Act, 1982, which would recognize the foetus as a human being with some rights. I do not believe one can take the foetus through the gestational period and come to the conclusion that at 12 o'clock noon on the fourth week, it suddenly becomes a person. I think it comes to the point where each Member of Parliament will have to decide whether rights should be extended to the foetus and who among us has the right to determine on what hour, on what day, in what week, or in what month those rights take place.