

*Criminal Code*

from having, unanimous views. In almost 80 per cent of cases, an abortion is not a solution to the problem of the pregnant woman, but rather worsens her condition and such is the opinion of a majority of physicians.

In this regard, Dr. Noel Walsh said, and I quote:

There are many aspects to the problem of abortion that I cannot consider due to lack of space. In conclusion, I would like to sum up the main ideas I developed:

You must agree with me, Mr. Speaker, that this psychiatrist shares our view that termination of pregnancy is not a solution but a complication and that we must consider each case in particular. He does not say there must be unanimous consent of the committee, but his conclusions indicate that we must take every possible precaution in order to protect the physical, mental and physiological health of the woman, to ensure the full and safe enforcement of the law and to secure understanding and a code of professional ethics within the therapeutic committee.

The first conclusion drawn by Dr. Walsh is as follows:

In the present state of psychiatric knowledge, there are to my mind no psychiatric grounds to justify abortion and, on this point, my opinion is shared by many psychiatrists. I even believe that I have demonstrated that abortion, in the views of psychiatrists, is always harmful.

So, Mr. Speaker, if Dr. Walsh, an eminent psychiatrist, is able to say that in almost all cases, abortion is harmful, and that the patient's case is aggravated, by it, we must take into consideration this expert's view and ask ourselves the following question: Would it not be better to stipulate that the therapeutic abortion committee must be unanimous in its decisions and that such decisions must be based on scientific and medical information and not on sentimental grounds in order to avoid the risk of allowing an abortion that could be more harmful than beneficial to the person in question?

● (3:40 p.m.)

Dr. Walsh states as a second conclusion:

There is every reason to fear that this bill does represent, in the structure of Canadian justice, a first crack which gradually could lead to a deterioration of human rights.

Here again, because I ask myself the question with regard to the amendment, I wonder whether these therapeutic abortion committees will not be in fact—as I have said earlier—the corner-stone of this legislation concerning abortion and therefore will have to ensure the enforcement of the law and of

justice for each human being, each patient, and if they cannot implement the legislation in accordance with medical and scientific standards, a deterioration of justice will follow and once again Dr. Walsh would have been right.

And to eliminate this problem and put all the chances on our side, because we are referring here to a guarantee and not a filibuster, the unanimity which should prevail, in our opinion, within the therapeutic abortion committee would be a tremendous guarantee for the patient, for the therapeutic abortion committee, for the government and for the administration of justice.

Dr. Walsh comes to his third conclusion and I quote:

The legislation will have adverse effects on the Canadian woman, Canadian family life and the quality of Canadian life in general.

Mr. Speaker, this does not necessarily relate to the amendment.

The fourth conclusion is really interesting and I quote:

The legislation will have a detrimental effect on the medical profession.

Mr. Speaker, one can see that we have here an interesting conclusion:

The act will have a harmful effect on the medical profession.

Therefore if we ask and demand that the therapeutic abortion committee make not a majority decision but a unanimous one as to the approval of abortion or the issuing of a certificate allowing abortion in the case of a patient, this will oblige doctors to perform abortions willingly only when it is really in the interest of the patient and in accordance with the ethics of the medical profession.

Short of that, we are in danger of minimizing the role of the medical profession.

That would justify Dr. Walsh who is afraid that the act will have a harmful effect on the medical profession.

We must maintain the confidence of the Canadian people in their doctors and protect the doctors themselves through certain safeguards in the law, with respect to their patients, in order precisely to strengthen the confidence that should be established between doctor and patient.

In his fifth conclusion, Dr. Walsh says and I quote:

The act will not reduce the number of criminal abortions.

Mr. Speaker, we believe that if we do not ask the therapeutic abortion committee to