

Criminal Code

the medical practitioners making up the psychiatric committee.

All hon. members know that, but only those of the Ralliement créditiste dare to say it, and even claim it. Members of the government, of the Liberal party, why have you not express your views? I apologize, one or perhaps three or four out of a large number did so. It would have been easier to circumscribe the problem had some of you stated what they think of this bill.

Mr. Speaker, the passing of the bill as it is means that if a mother gives birth to a child, she always suffer from psychological troubles from the very beginning of her pregnancy.

As I said earlier, this is as if we were saying that the infant must be killed as soon as he is born, because many people suffer from psychological troubles.

Now, as far as physical health is concerned, how many times does this situation occur? I have been told that the ratio of 1 to 10,000 was close to the truth. I do not have on hand that doctor's statement, but I know he quoted these figures before the committee on Justice and Legal Affairs.

When the pregnant mother catches some disease, the doctor ordinarily prescribes an immediate treatment to neutralize it, so that the mother can have a normal delivery.

Mr. Speaker, owing to the great advance in the field of medical science, the emergency cases where it is necessary to make a decision as to the life of the child are becoming less and less frequent.

• (4:20 p.m.)

It is therefore useless to include in this bill the words "or health". How many times have you seen a mother suffer from any illness after a childbirth? That happens very seldom and I have explained why. I firmly believe, for those are my convictions and my principles, that there are only the most urgent reasons—and they are very few and far between—that can justify be it even a discussion on a possible abortion.

I don't like the words "or", "if", "perhaps or likely". I would like to feel myself on firmer ground. That is why I favour the amendment in order to remove the words "or health".

In so doing, we would prevent innumerable abuses and protect medical practitioners. That is very important, because if a committee of doctors decides to prescribe a therapeutic abortion and a patient makes up her mind to

[Mr. Beaudoin.]

institute proceedings against the doctors, because she suddenly felt remorse, or for any other reason, she will damage the reputation of the gynaecologists, of the specialists of this hospital, of the therapeutic Committee or even the reputation of the hospital itself.

Mr. Speaker, if the hon. members want to participate in the debate, I invite specially my friends,—I have several among the Liberal members,—in order to see if any Liberal members in this house know exactly the importance and the seriousness of the bill under consideration. That would make me very happy.

For all these reasons, Mr. Speaker, I am in favour of deleting in clause 18 of Bill C-150, the words "or health".

Mr. Pierre De Bané (Matane): Mr. Speaker, I should like first of all to point out on the occasion of that nth amendment introduced by my colleague from the Ralliement créditiste that our parliamentary institutions, through the Créditiste's fault, is becoming a laughing-stock.

Mr. Speaker, when I see people who, for the sake of their conscience, their moral principles, their scruples, in the name of democracy, have been paralysing the business of this house for 19 days—

Mr. Gauthier: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order.

[English]

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

[Translation]

Mr. Gauthier: I believe that the hon. member is not speaking to the amendment.

[English]

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please. I think it is only fair to the hon. member for Matane (Mr. De Bané) that the Chair at least hear his opening remarks. As I have explained to other hon. members of the house, the Chair has tried to be as generous as possible in applying the rules of relevancy, sometimes possibly too generous in the case of some hon. members.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I would say that we have been particularly generous in terms of the Ralliement Creditiste. I think it is only fair that we hear the hon. member for