

Criminal Code

Sainte-Perpétue, l'Islet county, mother of 15 children, I quote:

Sir:

I want to give you my opinion on abortion. I do not know where we are going with those confounded laws passed by the government. Confound it! To kill or to have one's innocent child killed is an abominable crime. I daresay it is the greatest crime that will be perpetrated in the world.

We are farmers and we would never dare procure the abortion of a cow—

I wish to stress those words, Mr. Speaker, and keep on quoting:

—we would fear for its life, we would fear for its health. We do not know how to call those gentlemen who dare introduce such a bill. Think a while and hold on until the last minute and God will bless you.

I hope that several people will give their opinion like I did and that it will be taken into consideration.

Mr. Speaker, this lady was not afraid to have children since she had 15 of them. And today, I would say that the supporters of abortion do not approve of it for medical reasons only, but rather, in most cases, for purely economic reasons.

Let us consider, Mr. Speaker, the case of a 22 year-old young man who has just finished his studies and who is courting a young lady who has also just finished her studies at the age of 21. It is normal to be in love with a 21-year old young lady and to wish to marry. Suppose they decide to marry. The young man has a job which does not pay too much. So the young lady says: Let us marry and I will try to work to increase our family income. However, let us try and agree not to have any children for the next five years or so. The two young people who are 22 and 21 years old get married, which is normal and nobody has anything against it. After their marriage, of course, they make love but precautions are taken in order to avoid immediate pregnancy. But, at a certain time—this is what is called bad luck—the young bride becomes pregnant. Then, necessarily, the child will be born normally after nine months. This disturbs the young bride who will have to quit her job. This very fact will decrease the family income and will bring to this home not bitterness perhaps, but a kind of fear that they will not be able to make ends meet.

Mr. Speaker, any member, whether he belongs to the Liberal, the Progressive Conservative, the New Democratic or the Cr ditiste parties knows that such situations

[Mr. Caouette.]

exist today. The young bride who does not want to lose her job will try, in many cases, to find means to free herself from the child she is bearing even after two or three months. At that time, the young bride will perhaps be blamed. But, Mr. Speaker, is the bill which will legalize this practice consistent with Christian morality?

I am 51 years old. I was born in Amos, Abitibi, in 1917, when the only means of transportation was the C.N.

We were far away from any important centre of the province of Quebec. My mother bore 14 children, out of which 8 are still living today, and we managed to get through the recession. My father was a small employee with the provincial government and earned \$90 a month—and we used to sit 10 around the table! In those days, I was attending the College of Limbour, not far from Hull, and later the College of Victoriaville, run by the Brothers of the Sacred Heart. I was the second child of that family of ten who had to manage with \$90 per month, and, Mr. Speaker, as we scrambled through this recession—which was a catastrophe for many Canadians and for all the people of Quebec—on Sundays, the parish priest would say from the pulpit: “Do not be afraid to have children; large families will have less trouble than the small ones.” And he was right, Mr. Speaker. In fact, large families fared better during the recession than the small ones. I have seen bachelors who were practically starving whereas large families always managed to get through with a cow and a dozen hens. However, in those days, our dwellings were not, perhaps, as comfortable as those we have today, but we could live in them like human beings.

Today, at this very moment, if we toured the riding of Kamouraska, along the banks of the St. Lawrence, on the north or the south shore, we would see houses built 300 or 400 years ago, in which hundreds of little French Canadians were born. They never starved, Mr. Speaker.

And today, under the pretext that civilization is progressing, that we must become more civilized, we advocate birth control. Instead of passing laws to enable families to live decently, laws are being passed to limit the number of children. Let us go around Montreal: what goes on there? Instead of building the type of house families need, high-rise