

*Criminal Code*

such a mother rather than that of her child who might one day become extremely useful to society. Some, even, go as far as to say that... "health of the mother"... should also cover... "mental health."

According to doctors who have conducted studies on the problem, the mental troubles about which some women are complaining to justify their application for therapeutic abortion, are just subterfuges in order to get rid of their child.

• (8:30 p.m.)

Moreover, nothing shows that mental disorders are cured by ending pregnancy. And finally, therapeutic abortion could in some cases heighten mental disorders in a pregnant woman, when they give rise to feelings of frustration, hostility and shame.

For instance, Dr. Perlmutter of New York Bellevue Hospital, in his analysis of therapeutic abortion, which appeared in the *American Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology*, volume 53, 1947, page 1014, said the following:

There does not appear to be a single neurological or psychiatric condition which could justify ending pregnancy.

Even the threat of suicide resorted to by pregnant women to get an abortion cannot be a valid argument, according to Dr. Lawrence C. Iolb, director of the New York State Psychiatric Institute.

He wrote in 1958, in his book *Abortion in United States* the following:

There is an interesting report from Sweden about 344 women who were refused a therapeutic abortion, 62 of whom had threatened to commit suicide if their request was not granted. So far, none has committed suicide. The threat of suicide is frequently used for intimidation purposes.

As for "eugenic" abortion, designed to prevent the birth of children who are abnormal, crippled or affected by hereditary diseases, or simply to improve the human race, we find it equally unacceptable.

Let us keep in mind that our soldiers fought against Hitler who practised eugenics in order to preserve the integrity of the German race. Would we, today, include such a provision into our Code, or simply allow, because no mention is made of it, doctors to practise eugenics?

Professor Norman St. John-Stevás, on page 16 of the book entitled "The Right To Live" and previously quoted, tells the following story, and I quote:

A doctor is discussing with a colleague: "With regard to terminating a pregnancy, I should like

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your opinion. The father suffers from syphilis and the mother, from tuberculosis. What would you have done? I should have terminated it, replies the other. In that case, you would have killed Beethoven!

Finally, a few words on the argument raised by the supporters of therapeutic abortion whereby the fact that abortions are common in certain hospitals is an argument in favour of adopting the amendment to the act.

Mr. Speaker, thefts and crimes are increasing in Canada as in every other country in the world. The efforts of the police to check crime are becoming less and less efficient. But who would suggest that our present legislation against crime be abolished? Who would suggest that our police forces, the R.C.M.P., and municipal forces should be abolished?

And last, the arguments whereby therapeutic abortions lead to a decrease in clandestine abortions—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Béchard):** Order. I am sorry to interrupt the hon. member, but his time has expired.

**Mr. Rondeau:** Mr. Speaker, would the house allow me to continue my remarks for one minute only?

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Béchard):** The honourable member is aware that he must have the unanimous consent of the house. Does the house allow the hon. member to go on with his remarks?

**Some hon. Members:** Agreed.

**Mr. Rondeau:** Mr. Speaker, Professor Quay whom I quoted earlier, states the following:

The section on abortion proposed by the American Law Institute corresponds to the 1939 Danish law. Now while the number of legal abortions increased in 12 years to 5,000 per year, the number of criminal abortions, instead of decreasing or of disappearing, increased to 9,000 per year.

For all the reasons I have just listed, I do not think any hon. member, whatever his party—we have only heard from those objecting to the legislation—could put forward any argument supporting the bill because there is none.

I had the opportunity a few weeks ago to visit four western provinces and I was able to realize that opposition to abortion is as strong over there as it is here.

I believe all hon. members regardless of their faith should unite to ask the government to withdraw the proposed amendments to the Criminal Code relating to therapeutic abortion.