

*Criminal Code*

that every human being is entitled to claim. Without the right to life, we are deprived of all others.

The right to life is a natural right, for all human beings without exception, whether they are rich, poor or crippled. It means that all human lives have the same value.

That is the fundamental point on which rest our notions of justice, that is the recognition that all human beings, from their conception to their death, are equal in the sight of the law and have exactly the same right to live.

Life is the greatest possession given to us by the Creator. How many times have we not heard, from people at the point of death, the following words: I would give everything I own to continue to live or to recover? That is evidence that life is a blessing we all value.

It is a mistake to try to compare the value of life and that of a material good, because property, as human life, has a value. However, it is clear that they are different types of value. Property has value for man and for his aims, but one of the fundamental principles of our society holds that human life is a value in itself.

If we only considered the value of a person in relation to others, any human life could be sacrificed according to this point of comparison.

Such a value given by us to any human life does not depend upon the external appearance nor upon the power nor upon the intelligence of man. The life of a disabled or ill person has the same value as that of a person in the best of health.

We must therefore recognize that the child still in its mother's womb has a full human value and an equal right to live as a human being. The value of such a life before birth is compared to that of the life of a person existing already among us.

Before birth, the child is already living. The only difference is that such a child is concealed in its mother's womb so it is easier to consider it as not existing.

Mr. Speaker, the law must protect the right to live especially the right of the defenceless ones. It rests with the government to pass laws respecting all values and especially the right to live. Otherwise, what could be the value of all the other laws?

The right to live is a basic right and it is up to the legislator to legislate so as to protect such a right. The one who takes the life of another person takes away from that person a

possession, a value, in fact he robs that person of a right. We restrict when it comes to thefts of any kind. People are sentenced every day for such an offence. We are shocked sometimes by the more or less strict sentence that is delivered, considering the value of the stolen articles or the frequency of such acts.

And now, we want to legalize a still greater theft, one concerning the life of a person, a value that cannot be replaced. That is surely worthy of our consideration.

All kinds of reasons are being put forward to justify the proposed amendments, especially that the law should be in accordance with our times, that it is required for the well-being of society, that one must recognize life as it is nowadays and that all our laws should be amended and adapted to the technological era.

The generations that have succeeded one another for 2,000 years have heard many proposals of that kind. Scarcely 30 years ago, war was declared; the war that was to be the last one and that was to establish peace forever. At that time, the following slogan was used: Let us save Christendom. What Christendom? I still wonder why and I am not the only one.

• (8:50 p.m.)

Mr. Speaker, I do not intend to quote historic facts and precedents to make my personal convictions and those of my constituents known. I admit that our Criminal Code and some of our laws should be amended. Moreover, we of the *Ralliement créditiste* have proved on several occasions in the past that we did not intend to depart from our line of conduct, even if we believe that our laws should be improved and brought up to date, will not accept improvements that go against our personal convictions, natural law and the right to live.

That it may be necessary to elucidate the law, I agree. But when changes are made simply to suit an individual of a group, then I disagree. We are living in a period of protest, good or bad, but in a period in which efforts are made to banish violence from our laws and our lives. However, we are asked to consider abortion as a solution to the social problem of the unwanted child.

We are reminded by history that, not so long ago, some human beings were considered undesirable and had to sacrifice their life; when six million Jews were exterminated by the Nazis. Still nowadays, human beings like