

great compromise had been reached and it had been reached in favour of foetal rights. In my opinion, nothing could be further from the truth.

This legislation outlaws abortion, except—and it is a very important exception—when in the opinion of a doctor the health or life of the mother is likely to be threatened. Health is then defined as being the physical, mental and psychological health; by any stretch of the imagination, a wide and sweeping definition.

What the government has really done is to introduce a bill that at first glance seems to be pro-life but in practice is actually, or could be, abortion on demand. Nowhere does this legislation mention foetal rights. The foetus is without any protection whatsoever in this bill.

The government did not have the guts to define health. Instead, it has left the entire responsibility in the hands of Canada's doctors. I know that many people think that might be appropriate. For instance, I am sure that doctors such as Henry Morgentaler must be quite satisfied. Others do not share the same definition of health.

If this bill passes unamended, I am sure that in a short period of time some medical practitioners, a very small minority, will become abortion specialists because of their very loose definition of what constitutes a risk to the health of a mother. Although the legislation says there will be some protection against this type of thing happening, I think anyone who has examined the bill and has looked at some of the recent court rulings, including the Chantal Daigle case, would question whether or not any third party intervener would have any success in laying charges or getting a prosecution against a doctor's medical opinion in this instance.

Most important, the bill does not recognize society's interest in protecting the rights of the foetus. I happen to believe that the foetus represents life and with Bill C-43 there will not be any recognition anywhere in Canada for those rights.

As I mentioned earlier, I intend to vote this legislation through on second reading to committee stage, but let me say very clearly and unequivocally that if this bill is not changed to protect the rights of the foetus, if it is not changed to more clearly define the definition of the risk to the health of the mother, I will not be able to support it on third and final reading.

Government Orders

Bill C-43 is another disguise for abortion on demand. I personally find it a bit abhorrent when I look across at the government and see how weak-kneed it was when it did not seek to put a proper piece of legislation before this House. Bill C-43 does not protect the sanctity of human life and I cannot support any legislation that completely ignores those rights.

One other thing has to be said before I conclude. There is another important piece of the puzzle that has not been addressed by this government in its legislation. This government has failed in that it has not introduced companion legislation to remove the economic and other factors that force many women to choose abortion. There should never be a case in a society as wealthy as ours, with the resources that we have, as advanced as we are, where an individual chooses to have an abortion because she simply cannot afford to have and raise her child.

Yet the government comes in with a piece of legislation which is supposed to address the problem of abortion in our society and completely fails, through legislation, through government policy, to remove those economic indications that have caused thousands too many abortions to be performed on Canadian women.

Child care is not there. Income support programs are insufficient. Family planning programs which should be taught to children at a very early age in the school system and public education and awareness are nowhere in this bill or in any piece of companion legislation put forward by this government.

Therefore, it is my opinion that this government has introduced legislation that provides for far too easy access to abortion without addressing the real causes for abortion.

I started off by indicating that this was a very difficult debate for most of us to be involved in, but it is one that none of us can afford to skirt because it is a fundamental issue.

I do not intend, I have never in the past, nor do I intend in the future to lecture those who do not subscribe to my point of view or to criticize those who, for whatever reason, find themselves in a position that they have to choose legal or illegal abortions.