

*Vancouver Family Planning Clinic*

It goes on to say:

Very few of this type of family use the services of the family planning clinics—only 24 persons on social assistance visited the clinics last year, [that would be 1959] and while some, no doubt, seek their doctor's advice, the birth rate suggests that many do not.

This survey was conducted in 1960, but even in 1970 and now in 1971 there are only three large hospitals in Canada out of some 900-odd which have family planning clinics attached. One can realize the tremendous need. The survey goes on to state:

That this type of family can be successfully encouraged to plan their families has been shown in England, where a domiciliary family planning service in one instance reduced the birth rate of the families serviced over a period of two years from 7.8 to 6.3. This service is now being provided by an increasing number of English municipal health authorities through the agency of the Family Planning Association.

If we could get adequate family planning information in Canada, and I am talking specifically about British Columbia which is by no means the worst, but does require it, distributed throughout this country, along with accessibility to birth control devices we could reduce the average number of children per family. This would have a number of important results. It would reduce the burden of many families and enable them to achieve economic independence. The other day I heard a woman from Toronto say very pathetically, when discussing the problem of poverty: I have eight children and my husband is able to get work for only four months in the year. What am I supposed to do to make ends meet even on city welfare?

The very considerable cost to the state of supporting these additional children would be eliminated if we could get a reduction in the number of children. The survey suggests that:

Even a reduction in the average number of children per family of from, say, five to three children would mean close to 5,000 fewer children to be supported.

This would mean close to 5,000 fewer children being a worry and a burden to families which cannot support them, even though they worry the same as families in income groups which are able to support that many children.

The survey then states:

Fewer unwanted babies would also mean fewer children in the courts or in custodial care.

The remaining children would be better cared for by a less burdened mother.

The continuing cycle of dependency would be reduced to smaller proportions.

While environmental factors will play their part, it is reasonable to assume that defects of character, physique or intelligence were responsible for a good proportion of these families falling into the multi-problem category.

● (5:10 p.m.)

In terms of the future, breeding from the bottom does not make too much sense.

The people in this category know that and they are asking for help and advice in the matter of birth control. They are not getting it in anything like the amount we should be providing. I want to say I believe birth control

[Mrs. MacInnis.]

is of the utmost importance. The Family Planning Association of British Columbia in its recent leaflet states:

Babies born out of wedlock during the 1960's in this province increased from 7 to more than 12 per cent of total annual births. The largest group was born to mothers aged 15-19.

Many of these children are not adopted because the number of adoption homes is dwindling. Some concerned couples are trying to help by having one or two of their own, and if they want more, adopting the rest.

But there are always the left-overs.

Indeed, there are always the left-overs.

I should like to bring to your attention, Mr. Speaker, the words of Dr. O. M. Solandt, Chairman of the Science Council of Canada who, I am very glad to see, has recently solved a serious conflict of interest problem which concerned him and a number of others. Dr. Solandt, whose remarks on this subject of population control are always very wise, recently said this:

Trying to clean up pollution and solve our urban problems without controlling population growth is like treating a patient's fever with ice packs and aspirin without giving him the antibiotic that will directly attack the cause of the fever. Temporary efforts, just like ice packs, are essential, but we must attack the cause of the disease, not just the symptoms.

Too many people are congregated together in our urban areas trying to avail themselves of the services of their community and the funds which should not have to be handed out in such amounts in order to look after dependent people and their children. I would call attention to the fact that the recent report on the status of women has urged very strongly that birth control facts and devices should be available to all who need them across this country, including those at the school level. I read a report a moment ago to the effect that in British Columbia the largest group of babies born out of wedlock involved mothers aged 15 to 19. If this matter of family planning is directed only at married women, then it will be everlastingly too late to deal with this particular problem.

I should like to turn to another reason for action. There is great concern across this country about the rising incidence of abortion, both legal and illegal. The rising incidence of illegal abortions is well known and has been well documented on a number of occasions. But there are also far more legal abortions in some districts than should be necessary. One reason for the great number of legal abortions, where there is some opportunity for legal abortions and where they are really being carried out, is that people simply do not know the facts concerning the prevention of unwanted pregnancy.

Birth control ought to be the first line of defence against unwanted pregnancy. If we in this House do not succeed in moving this government toward having a wider program on birth control, and having more clinics available, then we fall down in our duty to cut down the incidence of unnecessary abortions. Of course, I am in favour of legalized abortion because at this time unless women can obtain abortions safely when required they will go to places where abortion is legalized. This involves a horrible discrimination against women who are poor and do not have the means to obtain a legalized