

have no hope for the future and no jobs, are taking it out on their children. There is compulsive abuse. Do we want these families to continue to have children if they should, in a moment of enlightenment, choose to have some control over their family and, if necessary, have an abortion? I think not, Mr. Speaker. Anyone who really knows the situation respects the future for children.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Bill Wightman (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Labour): Mr. Speaker, having heard the words with which the hon. member for Vaudreuil (Mr. Herbert) introduced Bill C-206, and the eloquence with which it was supported by my colleague, the hon. member for Kitchener (Mr. Reimer), I would not have addressed the House but would have been content to support the bill from my place. I am moved to say a few words, however, in light of the intervention we have just heard from the member of the NDP.

It strikes me that to argue that we do not have effective abortion on demand in this country is to ignore all the empirical evidence, and certainly the evidence offered by the hon. member for Kitchener. To equate vasectomy with abortion strikes me as convoluted reasoning, to say the least.

I shall not take the time of the House to make a point by point rebuttal of the statements we have just heard, but I will respond to the perception of the hon. member for Vancouver East (Mrs. Mitchell) that somehow the male members of this House are not emotionally concerned or involved about the issue. I would assure her, and all hon. members, that we are deeply involved and concerned. I would say, too, that the vast majority of people who speak with me on this subject and who have brought me to my present opinion, have been women. They have certainly been deeply and profoundly and emotionally concerned and involved.

I can guarantee, finally, that on this motion or any like motion, I will stand and support it.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Svend J. Robinson (Burnaby): Mr. Speaker, I rise to express some serious concern about the bill before the House today. There are a number of questions in this whole area of abortion which certainly I think all members of this House would want to consider very carefully.

In 1977, in January, Dr. Robin Badgley reported on this question of abortion and talked about some very serious concerns in this whole area. The Badgley report, which involved extensive consultations within the medical community, with women all across this country, and looked at practices in other countries, came to the conclusion that one of the most important factors in reducing the number of abortions was the existence of adequate family planning funding. Despite that

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conclusion, despite the clear message, which was found in the Badgley report, the response of the government was to slash the family planning program which is administered by the Department of National Health and Welfare, from \$2.1 million in 1978-79 to \$1.1 million in the current fiscal year and, in addition, to slash the sustaining grant to the Planned Parenthood Federation of Canada from \$600,000 to \$440,000.

No one in this House, I am sure, is "pro-abortion". Members on all sides of this House have a deep respect and reverence for life. Our concern, however, is that where strong and restrictive abortion laws exist, the simple reality is that they do not reduce the number of abortions. What they do, as the hon. member for Vancouver East said, is to drive poor women, women who cannot afford to go to other countries where abortions may be more readily available, to drive those women to the back street butchers.

It is the position of this party, and it has been our position for some time, as it is the position of the Canadian Medical Association, that this very serious decision by a woman to have an abortion is one which should be taken out of the framework of the Criminal Code. It is a decision which should be made by a woman in consultation with her doctor.

I should add, Mr. Speaker, that I, myself, have tabled a private member's bill on this subject. I am concerned, as well, with the application of the law, but from a somewhat different direction than speakers on both sides of this House who have spoken so far, other than my colleague from Vancouver East. I think the point which my colleague from Vancouver East made with respect to men legislating for women is an important point. There was one woman who spoke on this question and her views were quite clear and were very eloquently put. One of the concerns which was expressed by the Badgley report was that the law in Canada is not equitably being applied, that only in some 250 hospitals across this land are there therapeutic abortion committees, that particularly in the province of Quebec there are very serious problems in terms of accessibility to these therapeutic abortion facilities.

I must confess, Mr. Speaker, that I am somewhat surprised to hear the Parliamentary Secretary to the Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Roche) speak about 250 committees in a total of, I believe he said, 500 or 600 hospitals. One is somewhat disturbed to know that the parliamentary secretary—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. McCain): Order, please. The hour provided for consideration of private members' business has expired. It being after five o'clock p.m., this House stands adjourned until Monday next at two o'clock p.m., pursuant to Standing Order 2(2).

At 5.08 p.m. the House adjourned, without question put, pursuant to Standing Order.