

Criminal Code

Nothing in this legislation says that a married couple must limit their family. Those who do not practise family planning because of religious principles have nothing to fear. No one is forcing them to employ birth control methods. This bill is particularly apropos at this time, since we have disposed of the bill dealing with abortions. As I said on a previous occasion, we ought to revise our law first in the area of birth control. Fundamentally that is where family planning begins, and not after the woman has become pregnant. Those who are permitted by their consciences to use birth control methods will thus be able to plan families. I have no quarrel with that part of the bill. I have some reservations about the forms of birth control that may be used. We talk of the pill, of loop devices, diaphragms, condoms, or jellies. Loop devices particularly need to be inserted by qualified personnel, and I have some reservations about such devices. Will a doctor insert them, or will they be inserted by qualified nurses? I ask this because there have been cases where the loop has been inserted and has caused uterine infection.

I do not know whether the Minister of National Health and Welfare planned to introduce this legislation immediately after the abortion legislation was passed. His timing was fortunate because now the horse is before the cart. As I said before, this legislation will permit those who in all conscience can practise birth control to do so and thereby space their families and eliminate any excuse for abortions.

I also wanted to say something about new drugs. The present legislation attempts to take the doctor completely off the hook, so to speak, and I do not think that is right. No doctor may prescribe for any patient a barbiturate dose that is strong enough for suicide. The point of the matter is that if a patient is able to obtain only, say, 20 pills by way of doctor's prescription, trafficking would be far too expensive a matter. So, doctors' prescriptions do not enter the picture. In any event, if a doctor prescribes a suicidal dose or a dose which may be used for suicide, he gets into trouble with the college of physicians and surgeons. That, I feel, ought to be made clear. Also, since the doctor will prescribe drugs, he ought to be made to accept some responsibility for writing the prescriptions.

Lysergic acid is one of the new experimental drugs, and hardly anyone knows exactly what it does. It is well known to researchers that those who have taken the drug have had varying experiences. Some researchers think

[Mr. Rynard.]

that in some way the drug actually jumps across the insulating material between brain cells and thereby causes those wild hallucinations about which most of us have heard. We have heard of people jumping out of buildings. They actually believed they could fly. Not long ago a man jumped off a bridge in the belief he could fly. It was pointed out in committee that the drug could be manufactured from various, easily obtained substances. Yet not long ago researchers had difficulty in obtaining this drug while at the same time the drug was being peddled and manufactured on the street. This drug ought to be very rigidly controlled because it has most harmful effects.

While disagreeing with some parts of the bill, I support it in principle and therefore will vote for it. This is badly needed legislation and, since it follows almost immediately the passing of legislation dealing with abortion, it is most opportune and puts the horse before the cart. It would indeed be tragic if abortions became more frequent in family planning. As a matter of fact, they should have no place in family planning—and there should be little excuse for them.

Mrs. Grace MacInnis (Vancouver-Kingsway): Mr. Speaker, we need not waste time by saying how very general is the acceptance for this bill. I think the hon. member for Simcoe North (Mr. Rynard) adequately expressed the feelings of hon. members of this house and the people of this country in that regard. There is just one angle that none of us has referred to or emphasized. Having passed this legislation making birth control and family planning legal in this country, we as Canadians will now be able to go out and really do the job we ought to be doing as a member of the world community. Through the United Nations we ought to be able to reach a whole number of those countries which really need help with the controlling of their populations. Of course, prior to this time, although we were in a position to help the people of other countries in this way they could always say to us, "Aha! You want us as dark-skinned peoples to control our populations but you yourself cannot practise birth control legally." We can now help the peoples of these countries freely and openly.

• (4:50 p.m.)

We are also now in a position where the abortion legislation comes into its proper perspective. As the hon. member for Simcoe North (Mr. Rynard) has stated, it is the prop-