

*Abortion*

I will not go into it further, but it is a fact that much or more social work to assist in repairing the mental anguish after an abortion will be needed if abortions continue unchecked. The amount of assistance required to control and assist with unwanted pregnancies in ways other than abortion or killing an unwanted child needs to be found.

We as legislators have a duty and responsibility, and it would be all too convenient for us to avoid this controversial issue by insisting our hands are tied by the Supreme Court. That is not true. On reading the judgments one clearly finds that a fairly restrictive abortion law would be constitutionally acceptable. Parliament can indeed adopt another system to assure that the life or health of the pregnant woman is endangered before an abortion is permissible. That system, according to the judgments, could include a requirement that the danger be verified by a reliable and medically sound opinion of a person or persons other than the pregnant woman's own physician. A majority of the judges would uphold a criminal law that restricts access to abortion from conception to situations where there is an independently verifiable danger to the pregnant woman's life or health.

There are, therefore, a number of legal options available to Parliament to protect the rights of the unborn, and in the wake of the Morgentaler decision, even without resorting to the power to override certain sections of the Charter granted by Section 33. It is my opinion, indeed the opinion of most people in my riding of Kent, that we must consider these options and replace the law quickly and decisively, considering the right to life of the unborn child.

Abortions in Canada must be controlled. Any caring society must find ways to give both mother and child the right to life and the freedom to live well.

• (2340)

**Ms. Lynn McDonald (Broadview—Greenwood):** Mr. Speaker, I welcome the opportunity to take part in this very important debate. It is an opportunity to explain to my constituents of Broadview—Greenwood and to all who are taking part in the debate nation-wide where I stand on this issue.

I must begin by saying that I find that the labels pro-life and pro-choice both present difficulties. In my philosophic approach, I am very much shaped by the fact that I am a Christian believer in a religion which teaches me a sense of reverence for life and a belief in the purpose of creation. However, I have been a woman involved in the women's movement for so many years that I have a very strong sense of the desperation of women with unwanted pregnancies and of the need to have legal access to abortions.

I certainly respect the ideals of those in the pro-life movement. I certainly respect their vision as well. In a good society, there would not be recourse to abortion. In a better society

than the one in which we live today, there would be no unwanted pregnancies. I think there are many practical ways we could work to achieve that.

When our friends in the pro-life movement say that they want a law which respects human life from the moment of conception until death, I have to respond as a practical legislator by saying that it cannot be done. Such a law, if passed by Parliament, would simply not be respected in practice. Many illegal abortions would occur. There would be test cases and we would have another Morgentaler-type clinic. A case would go to court and I think a jury would, as in the past, decide that medical necessity prevails and we would see that law thrown out as unconstitutional.

Very severe laws mean that women will seek illegal abortions. There will be botched abortions and people will go back to the back street butchers. We know that that results in infertility and suicides in some cases. We do not want to go back to those days.

As legislators, we can promote the choice for women to carry their children to term. We can do this in practical ways. We can ensure that there is adequate child care and that there is parental leave which will make it possible for parents to welcome a new addition to the family. We can see that there will be support for single parents to raise children in difficult circumstances. We can see that there is practical support through family allowance and child tax credits as well as better provisions for parental leave. We need better contraceptives and adequate sex education.

I think that men can play a much more important role by acting responsibly and by thinking about the consequences of their own sexuality. I am rather disturbed when I hear that men want to intervene through court injunctions and the heavy hand of authority. Men have it within their power to teach young men that there are consequences of a sexual act and that if they do not want to be responsible for abortions being performed, they should not be responsible for unwanted pregnancies.

I would hope that those who want to see abortion eliminated from society, and I share that goal, would be much more active in dealing with the question of unwanted pregnancies and would take a much more responsible approach to sexuality. I think there is much we can do as legislators, but I do not think we have the option of simply passing some kind of idealistic law that would be flouted and would be ruled

The Government's motion suggests that there are two different stages in a pregnancy and that they ought to be treated differently. People in the pro-life movement resent this because they argue, quite correctly, I think, that human life exists from the moment of conception. What else is it but a human life? They are quite right. However, practically, the