

*Government Orders*

The need for abortions is almost entirely caused by the current lack of a social conscience. Nobody could object to a therapeutic abortion, that is in the case where the life or health of the mother is really threatened.

But the other abortions, those for instance that result from a whim, vengeance, socio-economic considerations, lack of generosity, irresponsibility, immaturity—how could they be justified? Or could they only be justifiable under an enactment?

At every turn my thoughts bring me back to that starting point—the fundamentally of happy christian ethics, and the social conscience that leads a notion to ensure its own survival. A society that eliminates its children soon after their conception is bound to disappear. There is no future for a society that refuses to be perpetuated.

It is a sad reflection, Mr. Speaker, that in Canada there were last year 65,000 therapeutic abortions as against 360,000 births. One child out of six was sacrificed.

Since the Bill was announced, there has been general dissatisfaction. Some view it as too permissive, others charge that the freedoms of women are being violated. My intention is not to deal once more with the basic issue of whether the foetus is or is not a human being.

But since a law is needed, let us take the time to look at what the physical and psychological implications are for women who will get an abortion in order to terminate a pregnancy.

Abortion is touted as the almost only and perfect solution for women faced with an unwanted pregnancy whose physical, mental and psychological health might be threatened.

But would the physical, mental and psychological health of those same women not be also threatened by an abortion?

Abortion is the radical solution to an often temporary problem. If we really want to protect the mother against the consequences of an unwanted pregnancy, we should at the same time caution her against the physical and psychological dangers.

In that respect, Mr. Speaker, let me join Father Jacques Croteau who had this to say: "I would be the last one to accuse a mother who had gotten an abortion of

deliberately wanting to kill her child. Things almost never happen that way, either in the mind or the heart of a woman faced with an unwanted pregnancy, in view of the fears, panic, anxiety, even distress that can grip her."

• (1940)

But in practice, once the abortion is performed and the baby is no more, many deep and at times indelible psychological and physical scars remain.

Last January, right after his election as President of the United States, George Bush said at the Roe vs. Wade rally, and I quote:

[*English*]

Before you begin your march today, on this first Monday of my presidency, I wanted to take just a few brief moments to restate my firm support of our cause, and to share with you my deep personal concern about our American tragedy of abortion on demand.

We are concerned about abortion because it deals with the lives of two human beings, mother and child. I know there are people of good will who disagree, but after years of sober and serious reflection on the issue, this is what I think. I think the Supreme Court's decision in *Roe versus Wade* was wrong and should be overturned. I think America needs a human life amendment. And I think when it comes to abortion there is a better way, the way of adoption, the way of life.

I know that you and hundreds of thousands with you across the country have raised a voice of moral gravity about abortion, a voice of principle, a full voice that properly asserts and affirms the basic dignity of human life—

I promise you that the President hears you now and stands with you in a cause that must be won.

[*Translation*]

What strikes us at the outset is that President Bush talks about two separate entities: the child and the mother, which raises a question: Why is it only by destroying the former that we can solve the problem of the latter's unwanted pregnancy? Why not a life-enhancing solution rather than a death sentence?

I think it is unfair to the mother faced with an unwanted pregnancy to present abortion as the only option. If it is indeed the case, where is her freedom of choice? And does the woman asking for an abortion know all the potential and likely consequences of her decision? Does she know, for example, that abortion has been linked with subsequent problems such as more difficult pregnancies and deliveries, congenital deformations, ectopic pregnancies, psychological problems, suicidal tendencies, et cetera?