

outset of the sittings of that committee I received the impression, from listening to the comments of my colleagues on the committee, that of the various groups and individuals who had been selected as witnesses, the pro-choice representations outnumbered the pro-life side of the issue almost two to one. Reading the summarized briefs of these witnesses revealed that none of the pro-choice advocates were considering amendments to the bill, but instead were recommending that it be dropped with no criminal legislation to replace it. Of prospective witnesses, the ones who offer debatable suggestions for shoring up the deficiencies of the bill are generally pro-life.

Therefore, since the bill was government initiated, it seemed very odd that the number of witnesses who could expertly recommend amendments to keep it afloat in some legitimate sense was overwhelmed by those who seek to negate this and all future criminal legislation on abortion.

Moreover, I have copies of briefs from at least four other pro-life groups who have requested invitation to appear and who have received no invitation. These are: Campaign Life Coalition, Right to Life of Toronto and Area, Action Life, and Alliance for Life of Southwest Ontario.

In reality, it is up to a committee to send out a summons to appear, and this it can do unsolicited. The larger denominations that have a necessarily pro-life stance, Jewish or Christian, have not, to my knowledge, been summoned up to this date.

● (1420)

All these witnesses to the important committee process are able to speak substantially to the legal, constitutional, ethical, sociological, and scientific implications of this bill, than what is presented in the pro-choice briefs that I have read—since the pro-life masses are, like the true mother before Solomon, willing to discuss terms.

As well, society is known to lean more than just half way toward the legal protection of the sanctity of human life. My own 1988-1989 survey of 65,000 persons across Canada obtained a response rate of 16.4 per cent, which is far more than Gallup polls and most of the media polls on the issue for whom 10 per cent is considered excellent. The results of my survey substantially clarify what several media polls had begun to find, in spite of their methodological bias. Seventy-three per cent of the respondents to my survey consider an unborn child at any stage to be a human being. Sixty-nine per cent, more than the two-thirds majority we require for leave of the rules in this house, believe that all human beings have absolute right to life at every stage of development. Disturbing enough that there should be any, those who would have abortion on request were only 14 per cent.

The public support for defence of unborn Canadians is overwhelming. Already, in 1975, some 35 boxes of petitions from over 1.027 million Canadians who sought such protection were presented to Parliament. This is several times more people than filed petitions at any other time in Canadian history. With increasing awareness of post-abortion syndrome and a blood tide of 70,000 killings a year of innocent and

[Senator Haidasz.]

helpless preborn children, the public demands for legislation protecting its first interest, human life, is only increasing. It would be only fair, therefore, to try to balance fairly the proportion of pro-life witnesses in a committee studying Bill C-43.

In addition, I noted the conspicuous absence of medical and scientific experts such as the world-renowned geneticist and Nobel Prize laureate, Professor Jérôme LeJeune of Paris, the doctor who established uncontroverted evidence in the Borowski case of 1987-88 that human life begins at conception. Instead, we were to hear from Henry Morgentaler, whose only real expertise I shudder to describe.

At the outset of committee sessions, I was given to believe that the Legal and Constitutional Affairs committee does not anticipate recommending amendments to the house, except perhaps to report an amendment formerly dealt with in the House of Commons Legislative Committee, as brought up for mention by the Minister of Justice. That does not amount to a recommendation for amendment, as she herself did not recommend it.

The preponderance of witnesses already selected by the steering committee do not recommend anything that endorses the principle of criminalizing abortion. I could be tempted to wonder if the committee had decided in advance to let the bill die because of its great unpopularity. It could do this by reporting the nearly unanimous objections of its selected witnesses to criminalizing abortion at all. After all, even the Justice Minister changed her tone to avow that she could just as happily live with no law on abortion.

Upon making these observations, I rose in this chamber on October 25—which was my earliest opportunity—to give notice of my motion now before honourable senators. My motion was that the Standing Senate Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs be instructed to act fully as a committee and try amendments, after calling pertinent witnesses from the major fields that Bill C-43 will dramatically affect. Without a law protecting preborn children, the research and experiments on human beings in fertility labs and other clinics have no ethical guidelines for the sanctity of the conceived life itself. All the believers in one God, who live in this great land, could not brook lawlessness; and where there is utter disregard for the innocent and the helpless, the seeds of deepest civil strife are sown.

Honourable senators, as I mentioned upon rising, in my research outlined on June 26 in this chamber, I found in Bill C-43, as presented to us from the other house, some 14 major flaws to which Senator Frith drew our attention. I strenuously argued against its design in the received form. However, I for one have studied amendments that would greatly improve this bill and perhaps render it acceptable to this whole socially-sensitive house and to Canadian society. I fail to see how the government side could object to that, as Canadians far and wide have for some three years besought solid legislation in this field.