

MORGENTALER WANTS "FREESTANDING" CLINICS IN N.B.

INTERVIEW RAISES QUESTIONS

by NUJMA YAQZAN

A name that is prominent in today's dealings with abortion is that of Dr. Henry Morgentaler. This past Wednesday, Dr. Morgentaler was reached by phone in Toronto to discuss abortion with people who called in to UNB's radio station, CHSR-FM.

Not enough people called to create any real debate, and Dr. Morgentaler had a lot of free air time to present his ideas without any rebuttal or much comment from listeners.

When asked what he thought of the recent Supreme Court ruling (which declared Canada's present abortion laws to be unconstitutional), Dr. Morgentaler was expectedly pleased. "I think it was a momentous decision for the women of Canada. They should have the freedom to live in a democratic society and have a viable Charter of Rights protecting them against the interference of the state."

Dr. Morgentaler was not shy in letting it be known that he disapproves vehemently with New Brunswick's reluctance and refusal to allow the construction of an abortion clinic within the province. "I personally have examples of hundreds of women having to wait fifteen and twenty hours in the winter to get a procedure that they should have in their own communities. I am dismayed by the attitude of the government of N.B." He later called it

"sadistic" and "cruel".

He mentioned that he has sent a critical letter to Premier McKenna asking him not to let N.B. women "suffer unnecessarily", because of the stress, fatigue and travelling to a strange province that they must undertake to get "a necessary service". "I do not understand (why NB is against a clinic)", Dr. Morgentaler continued, "it is the ignorance of facts. Abortions are safer in free clinics than in a hospital".

Dr. Morgentaler stressed that (his) clinics offer the caring and compassion he feels are not present in hospitals. The clinics preserve a woman's dignity and future, he believes. "It is a shame that the government of your province does not recognize the legitimate health needs of women and is rejecting my offer to train (individuals to work in a clinic)". The price of an abortion can be as high as \$800.00 and Dr. Morgentaler's policy is to reduce this fee for those who cannot pay it.

One slightly irate caller, an adopted individual, pointed out that "my birth mother might have aborted me. I

wouldn't be here today. How can this be better for children in Canada?" Dr. Morgentaler skirted the question by telling the caller he was fortunate to have ended up in a family able to provide him with nurturing, caring and loving and that women and couples should have a choice and not be compelled to carry a pregnancy when it results from a "biological accident".

Another listener commented that the new Supreme Court ruling has not actually made abortion a right, but has only claimed that the present law is unconstitutional. "It's not important whether it's a right or not," Dr. Morgentaler answered. "It is an implied right. It implies security. Every week delay increases the danger of major complications by 20%".

Later, an off-air listener asked to comment on this point remarked, "Dr. Morgentaler obviously made a contradictory statement. On one hand, a woman must have her legal rights and be provided with a legitimate abortion on demand. The law should be the law in that case. But when the

law has not yet declared an abortion to be a right, the legal system doesn't matter anymore? So why don't we all now grab a copy of the constitution in search of implied by non-granted rights...?"

Dr. Morgentaler explained that the limit for abortion is anywhere from 16 to 24 weeks into the pregnancy. He then went on to describe how the procedure is accomplished. "The patient is put under local anesthesia. A gynecological test is given to see where the uterus is. If the patient is nervous, a pill or injection of a narcotic to remove anxiousness and stress, and pain, is administered. An anesthetic is injected into the neck of the womb. The natural opening of the cervix is dilated gradually. When the proper opening is reached, depending on the length of the pregnancy, a machine aspirates out the foetal material." This suctioning takes only 5 to 15 minutes, and the physical recovery (of the woman) is immediate, with approximately 2 hours rest being the only stipulation.

It is not the abortion of a human being, Dr. Morgentaler

insisted and that "there isn't a foetus, but a zygote at conception." A zygote is a diploid cell formed at conception when the sperm fertilizes the egg. Cells are considered to be the basic unit of life and so the pro-life argument is that the life of a human being has indeed begun at conception regardless of whether it has been fully expressed physically.

Pro-life organization members are people who believe that abortions are morally wrong and that life must be preserved. Dr. Morgentaler commented that such people are "foetus fetishists" and only "pretend to be moral persons". After the broadcast, a pro-life supporter took exception to the comment, remarking "That's quite a strong and unreasonable accusation to make against someone who prefers life over death".

A CHSR-FM spokesperson said that the purpose of Wednesday night's program was to provide the university community with an opportunity for information and discussion.

He's not a pussy: He's a tiger!

"He's no pussy cat... he's a tiger!" is what a nominee stated about SU Presidential candidate Hitler Kitty. He's a prime-rate choice to represent us, and remember Aristotle: "Man is a political animal," so why not vote for one?

If you're wondering just who this moustached candidate is and what he can offer the electorate of UNB besides getting rid of the dirty rats on campus, well listen in.

When asked about his first name, he informed us that it was a result of a quarrel over

giving him a name that resulted in a combination of Hitchy and Lerchus - it also correlates with the moustache. It's not a name he's proud to bear but it's not the name who makes the cat. It's the cat who makes the name.

His platform operating on a "Paws-off Policy" is entrenched in the desire to decrease student apathy and increase the student-standard-of-living by pushing for lower beer prices and soft (litter) toilet paper.

Be open minded - write in Hitler Kitty for SU President.

Day of Solidarity

The Fredericton YM-YWCA will observe a "Day of Solidarity" with the victims of apartheid in south Africa and Namibia on March 21. All participants in 'Y' programs on that day will have an opportunity to sign a petition calling for an end to the state of emergency in South Africa, the release of all detained children in South Africa, and the removal of restraints against democratic organizations in South Africa and Namibia.

This petition is being circulated in more than 90 countries by the World Alliance of

YWCA. The petitions from around the world will be delivered to President Botha of South Africa on June 16, South African Youth Day, and the anniversary of the Soweto massacre.

The aim of the YM-YWCA Day of Solidarity is to focus public attention on the evils of apartheid, with a particular emphasis on its effect on children and youth.

Individuals or organizations willing to help circulate the petition may contact Rick McDaniel, International Program Director at the Fredericton 'Y' for copies.

All groups wishing to be included in next year's **Student Handbook** should submit a description of your Club / Organization, its purpose, contact person, phone number and any other pertinent information.

Send all submissions to:
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The Saint Thomas Student Union
in cooperation with
the St. Thomas Political Science Department
and the Canadian Federation of Students
presents

Vladimir Kirillov

First Secretary of the Soviet Embassy

Mr. Kirillov specializes in labor related issues with an overview on major changes in the Soviet Union. In particular, he will be speaking on Mikhail Gorbachev's policies of *glasnost* and *perestroika*. In past visits to other campuses, Mr. Kirillov has not shied away from controversial questions.

FORMAT: 30 minute speech followed by question period
WHEN: 2:30 p.m. Wednesday, March 23
WHERE: St. Thomas Lecture Auditorium
Edmund Casey Building

FREE OF CHARGE